

LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

THE RIGHT OF TRANSLATION IS RESERVED.]

[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

No. 202.—VOL. VIII.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING MARCH 23, 1867.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[THE CAPTIVE DISCOVERED.]

REGINALD'S FORTUNE.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Brave spirits are a balm to themselves:
There is a nobleness of mind that heals
Wounds beyond selves.

Cartwright.

WHILE Mrs. Westcourt had been thus assisting at the elopement of her daughter with "Prince Villetsky" the remaining members of the party had reached the ruins and commenced an exploration of them. A brief examination sufficed for nearly all, the abbey ruins being familiar to everyone excepting Willa, and the elder people retreated to the lawn, while the younger ones seated themselves upon some fallen columns and heaps of stones.

"What a strange old place!" exclaimed Willa, addressing her lover. "I should like to explore it thoroughly. Isn't there some old legend connected with the abbey?"

Mrs. Westcourt came up at this juncture, in time to overhear the last question, and replied by stating that a ghost was supposed to haunt the vaults of the mansion.

This statement provoked a great many merry inquiries, and the merchant's wife drew upon her imagination a little, picturing the ghost of a monk, with chains dangling down to his heels, keeping up a constant promenade in the underground passage of the mansion.

"I wouldn't go down into one of those vaults for anything," declared a tall, handsome girl, who was the leader of the party. "Not that I believe in such superstitions, of course, but I haven't the physical courage to endure the trial."

This appearing to be the general sentiment, Mrs. Westcourt withdrew to the company of the elder people, very well satisfied with her success, and quite easy upon the point of the captive's security in her underground cell.

"Instead of frightening me, Mrs. Westcourt has only excited my curiosity," said Willa, laughing, after the departure of the merchant's wife. "I don't

believe in ghosts, but I should like to see that cell where the poor monk was confined. I suppose it is impossible to enter the vaults from the ruins, but we might get the keys of the house and make up a party to explore the haunted passages."

Full of life and merriment, Willa had grown to be a great favourite among her fellow guests, but she could find no one to second her daring proposition, even Reginald declaring it too venturesome.

"Not that you might meet the monk in chains," he said, with a smile, "but you might get a cold in those damp passages that would be a very unpleasant reminder of your temerity."

Willa yielded the point gracefully, and remarked that she would see all the ruins that were visible. Arising, she fluttered away among the columns, singing as she went, and her lover followed her, eager to explain and exhibit the various features so familiar to him.

Their young companions, influenced by the preceding conversation and the place being suitable, began a discussion about ghosts, many of them relating wonderful tales they had read and heard; the substance of each was enough to chill the blood and make them gather closer together, speaking with hushed voices.

Meanwhile, Willa and Reginald, absorbed in each other's society, visited the entire ruins, pausing at last in a small room that seemed in a much better condition than the rest.

"What room was this, Regie?" asked Willa, looking from the narrow windows upon the neglected garden. "It's at a distance from our friends, you see, and at the back of the buildings!"

"It was the Abbot's private room, I have heard," was the reply as Reginald industriously dusted the window seat. "Sit down and rest, darling, before our return. Notice how the sunlight streams through the broken roof!"

"It reminds me of some old picture," said Willa. "How beautiful everything looks, Regie! I wonder if those old monks who lived here, when the abbey was new, were as happy as we are!"

"No, they could not have been, for they had no

one to love," answered her lover, tenderly. "Their lives were grim and solitary, too full of gloom for happiness. How pleasant it is," he added, thoughtfully, "to know that Mr. Aylmar and Miss Tracy are actually engaged to be married! For weeks I have been hoping as much from this *fête*, dear little Willa. I am rejoiced that the day that beheld my own great joy removed all shadows from the paths of our loved ones!"

"They have waited long for each other, Regie, but both seem to be as loving as though they were in their first youth!"

The young lovers sank into a pleasant reverie, from which Reginald aroused himself, remarking:

"In old times, Willa, abbots liked good cheer, and that door you see in the wall probably leads to the vaults formerly used as wine-cellars."

"A door!" cried Willa. "Oh, open it, Regie. I must have one glimpse of the dreary vaults—just one!"

Reginald smiled, and made the effort to open the door.

It had evidently been many years since it had swung on its hinges, for it required the exercise of all his strength to pull it open. Finally, it yielded to his determined efforts and opened half-way.

A narrow stone staircase was alone revealed.

Willa gave a timid, hesitating glance into the darkness, and then said:

"If we only had a light, Regie, I should like to go down there!"

"If you wish it you shall go!" was the reply. "Just wait a minute, Willa, while I get a lantern. Podley brought one or two for explorations!"

Willa stood in the dark doorway leading to the vaults, while her lover, desirous of gratifying her wishes, hastened to Mr. Podley, who was engaged in arranging the luncheon, and secured not only a small lantern but a comfortable shawl.

"The luncheon will soon be ready, Mr. Reginald," said the butler as the young gentleman hurried away.

Reginald nodded, and hastened back to Willa. Wrapping her closely in the shawl, he said:

"Now let us have a look at the ghost, darling, and then return to our friends. I did not speak to any of them, for they did not seem to have missed us!"

Passing down the staircase, they found themselves in a dark, damp corridor, off which were vaults that had evidently been used for storing wines.

Willie grew timid and clung to her lover's arm, as if for protection, and as she nestled to his side, her footsteps pattering beside his over the stone flooring, Reginald felt in no hurry to regain the outer world.

In some places the passage was nearly choked up by stones that had broken through when the wall of the building above had fallen, but, surmounting these difficulties, the young couple pressed on.

The passage seemed suddenly to grow wider, and the vaults to assume a different character, keys being in every lock, and chains hanging loosely outside every door.

"This is where they shut up refractory monks, I suppose," said Willie, in a timid whisper. "How terrible such a confinement must have been here! And there is a little staircase, choked up with fallen stones! It led, I suppose, to one of the ruined buildings. Let us look into the cells, Regie."

Forgoing her timidity, she opened the doors as they passed on, exploring each cell with the aid of the lantern, and the vaults soon echoed with the sounds of their laughter and the trampling of their feet.

"Oh, Regie, we have more courage than all the rest!" exclaimed Willie, at last. "They will be greatly astonished to find that we have explored the vaults and not been injured by the ghost! I shall be delighted to describe to them our adventure. Now we had better turn back, had we not?"

As Reginald acquiesced, Willie opened a door beside them and they found themselves on the threshold of a sort of antechamber.

And at the same moment they beheld a few dots of light, that gleamed through holes in the upper part of a door, that evidently opened into an inner cell.

Willie caught her lover's arm, suddenly becoming silent, and they heard, distinctly, a few faint notes of a familiar hymn.

"Oh, what can that be, Regie?" whispered Willie, clinging to him. "Someone must be in that cell!"

Willie seemed frightened, but recovered her self-possession when her lover remarked:

"You are right. Someone is in there. Perhaps some member of our party has come down into the vaults by some other way. We will see!"

He led the maiden forward to the door, and endeavoured to open it, discovering that it was not only locked but chained.

"There is some mystery here," he said, "and we must investigate it!"

He knocked loudly upon the door, and awaited some response.

The singing within immediately ceased, and footsteps were heard approaching.

Reginald knocked again still more loudly.

"Oh, who is there?" cried a faint voice, that both recognized as belonging to a woman.

"Someone is a prisoner here, Willie," exclaimed Reginald, repressing his astonishment and regaining his presence of mind. "The key is gone. I will run and collect all the keys in the various doors along the corridors and try them in this lock. Remain here in my absence."

He hurried away, bearing the lantern, and Willie employed herself in his absence by unfastening the chain of the door.

In a few minutes he returned and tried the various keys he had brought, eventually finding one that fitted, and with this he shot back the bolt.

He then opened the door, finding himself face to face with Mary Hayward.

The gentle captive was very pale, yet a look of hope rested on her features, and her eyes had an eager expression.

She looked at Reginald, and beyond him, her eager expression fading, and she said:

"Is Wixon with you? Has Wixon come to rescue me?"

The astonishment of the young lovers was greatly increased at this address, and Willie asked the captive's name and why she was there.

"My name is Mary Hayward," was the response. "Mr. Westcourt shut me up here! Oh, help me away!"

She cast a wild glance at the door, and then hurriedly put on her bonnet and shawl, and started as if to flee.

Reginald comprehended the whole matter at a glance, remembering the accusations of Wixon Fennes against the merchant.

"Put on your veil, Miss Hayward," he said. "You are free! Come with us."

Mary obeyed his suggestion, assisted by Willie,

and then, without a last glance at the cell, where she had spent so many weary days, stepped out into the antechamber.

"We had better lock the cell again," said Reginald, suiting the action to the word. "If Mr. Westcourt should come down before we leave, all must look safe to him. No wonder his wife was anxious that we should believe in a ghostly monk, and so keep away from the vaults."

He fastened the chain, and then conducted them through the passage by the way he had come.

In one of the cells, near the end of the row, he threw the handful of keys he had collected, and the sound echoed in their ears until they reached the stone staircase leading to the Abbot's room.

"Sit down here and rest," he then said, tossing the lantern aside. "You are both pale and trembling. No one will think of looking for us here, and before I decide what to do I should like to hear the particulars of your story, Miss Hayward. Why did my uncle imprison you?"

"Your uncle! Are you Mr. Reginald?"

The young gentleman replied in the affirmative.

Mary looked at him with great interest, and then said:

"If I had only seen you a few weeks ago, Mr. Reginald! Then I had the power to lighten your anxieties and brighten your future. But now—"

She paused, the tears springing to her eyes, and Willie clasped her hand in affectionate sympathy that seemed to call forth her confidence.

Encouraged by their kindness, Mary told her story, beginning at the cruel wrong done to Wixon Fennes years before by the merchant, relating how her lover had obtained the papers relating to Reginald's fortune; how those papers had been disappeared in the most mysterious manner; how Mr. Westcourt had come in quest of them, and how she had gained his signature to the confession, and finally how *that* too had disappeared, and the merchant had abducted her from her home, bringing her to the underground cells of the abbey.

Willie shed tears of sympathy for Mary, and pressed her hand more fervently when the late captive told how carefully and long she had guarded those documents, and how terrible was her disappointment at their loss.

"You darling girl!" she exclaimed, kissing her.

"We are just as grateful to you as though they had not disappeared. You have shown your good, kind heart, and we shall always love you!"

"We!" repeated Mary, glancing from one to the other of the young couple.

Willie blushed and looked shyly at her young lover, who in return bestowed upon her such a proud and loving glance that Mary could not fail to comprehend the relations existing between them.

"How did you happen to find me?" she asked. "I thought of course that Wixon must have tracked me here. Why were you in the vaults?"

Reginald explained their presence in the subterranean passage, blessing Willie's freak that had led to Mary's rescue, and he then said:

"Mr. Westcourt is among the party to-day. Would you wish to meet him and overwhelm him with confusion?"

"Oh, no, Mr. Reginald," answered the gentle Mary; "I do not want to meet him yet. I am tired, and would like to go somewhere where I should meet no gay company. I think I had better start for home immediately."

"Not until you have rested, Miss Hayward. Stay here, if you please, with Willie, while I go for Mr. Aylmar. He will know what to do."

Leaving the maidens together, he made his way from the ruins to the lawn, where the excursionists were scattered in groups eating their luncheon. They were very merry, and Reginald was hardly noticed as he made his way to Mr. Aylmar's side.

The proprietor of the manor was sitting on the edge of the ruins at the feet of Miss Tracy, whom he was entertaining in the most hospitable manner, and he greeted Reginald with a smile, saying:

"You young people have decidedly vagrant tendencies, my dear boy. There have been loud demands for you, for Miss Willie, and Miss Westcourt, besides one or two others. Where have you all been? Have you had anything to eat?"

Not yet, replied Reginald, glancing around and assuring himself that his relatives were engaged in a distant group and quite oblivious of his movements.

"Willie and I have found something, Mr. Aylmar, which we want to show you. Will you come?"

"Certainly," was the response as Mr. Aylmar set down his plate beside a wine-bottle on a large stone. "If Miss Tracy will excuse me for a minute?"

Miss Tracy smiled acquiescence, and Reginald conducted his friend from the gay scene.

"Why, it's a long way off," exclaimed Mr. Aylmar, in a tone of good-humoured remonstrance.

"Couldn't you have waited a little while, Reginald? Miss Tracy needs my attendance. What have you found? A pile of bones, Mr. Westcourt's ghost, an inscription, or a pot of old gold coins?"

"None of these things," said Reginald. "We have been down among the vaults—"

"A decidedly foolish thing, my dear boy. You had much better have been eating your luncheon."

"And we found there," continued Reginald, "locked up in one of the dreary cells, Miss Mary Hayward."

"What?"

"You know Mr. Westcourt has leased the abbey? Mr. Fennes was right. My uncle abducted Mary Hayward, brought her here, and locked her up in the vaults."

Mr. Aylmar uttered an energetic expression, decidedly condemnatory of the merchant, and had barely time to learn the facts of the case when they entered the presence of the maidens.

He was favourably impressed with the meek and saintly face of Mary as he could not avoid being, and the late captive was obliged to repeat much of her story, in which task she was ably assisted by Reginald and Willie.

At first, Mr. Aylmar was in favour of taking Miss Hayward among his guests, but her reluctance, and his own apprehensions of the effect of such a scene upon his guests, induced him to yield to her desire for quiet, and he said:

"You shall go to the manor immediately. Reginald and Willie shall accompany you, Miss Hayward, and your desire for retirement shall be respected. No one shall know of your presence at the manor until you are willing it should be known, and my housekeeper will see that you have a very retired room."

"But I ought to go home, Mr. Aylmar. Wixon and my uncle must be fearfully shocked about me."

"I will telegraph to them immediately. Have no anxieties, Miss Hayward. You are in the hands of friends who will care for you. Your friends will arrive at the manor before you could reach your home."

Mary knew that she was scarcely strong enough to travel without, at least, one night's rest, and acquiesced in Mr. Aylmar's decision with a feeling of relief.

Mr. Aylmar then took out his note-book, and wrote a message to the effect that Mr. Fennes would learn something about the lady for whom he was searching by visiting Aylmar Manor without delay. This he read to Mary, adding:

"I do not want to make the message too plain in its meaning, nor too decided. The reaction from his violent grief must not be too sudden."

Mary assented, remarking that her late jailer had informed her that her guardian was very ill, and that she should, therefore, return to the cottage on the morrow, at the very latest.

"Reginald, you had better take one of the hooded carriages and set out immediately, while I send Podley with this telegram," said his friend. "You will reach home an hour or two before us, I think."

This programme was carried out.

Reginald conducted the maidens by a by-path to the carriages, selected one, and set out for home, promising that it should be sent back in time for its former occupants, and Mr. Aylmar dispatched Podley, quite secretly, with the telegram.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

To what galls the gods give
A single deviation from the track,
Of human duties leaves even those who claim
The homage of mankind as their born due,
And find it, till they forfeit it themselves.

The excursionists arrived at Aylmar Manor an hour or two after Willie and Reginald with the rescued captive, all in good spirits. Mr. Aylmar, having satisfactorily explained the absence of the young lovers, without allowing anyone, excepting Miss Tracy, to suspect the true cause of their hastened return. Mr. Westcourt and his wife, particularly, were in high spirits, on account of the supposed success of all their schemes, and they congratulated each other that the visit to the abbey had been so cleverly managed that no member of the party had even suspected the existence of a prisoner in the abbey vaults.

As they entered the manor house they encountered Reginald in the corridor, and the merchant stopped him, inquiring for his daughter.

"I do not know where she is," was the cold reply. "Is she not with the party?"

"No. On leaving I looked for her, but supposed that she had returned with you and Willie. No one noticed her after our entrance to the abbey grounds. Where can she be?"

At this juncture Mrs. Westcourt interposed, remarking:

"Perhaps she did not feel well and asked Podley

to bring her home. He left the abbey long before we did. We may possibly find her in her chamber. I will go and see!"

She hastened to do so, while her husband proceeded to his own chamber, which she soon entered, in a state of great apparent excitement.

"Oriana is not in her room, Reid," she exclaimed, "and her trunk and jewel-box are gone, and I found this note and package upon her dressing-table. They are both addressed to you and me. What can it mean?"

The merchant hurriedly tore open the letter his wife handed to him, and they read its contents together.

"Eloped! Oriana eloped!" he ejaculated, in mingled astonishment and anger.

"But with a prince, Reid—a real prince!" insisted Mrs. Westcourt.

"But what proof have we that he is a prince, beyond his own word? The silly girl will bitterly rue this step. But perhaps it is not too late to overtake them. I will pursue them and bring Oriana back!"

He started up from his chair, but paused as his wife opened the packet, and exclaimed:

"Look, Reid! These papers seem to be proofs of his rank and wealth! They have been left by him to relieve our natural anxieties. See, here are letters signed by his mother, the old princess, and letters from his steward, and here is a quantity of notes from noblemen, written in the most familiar terms, showing that the prince was intimate with them. And these contain journals, with notices of Prince Villetsy in their columns. They speak of him in the most flattering terms."

Mrs. Westcourt had thus pointed out all the credentials of the prince, taking up each separate packet as she had described it, and showing great familiarity with its contents.

"You must be gifted with second-sight, Isabella," said her husband, suspiciously. "You seem to recognize the handwriting, and from a look at one letter tell the contents of the rest!"

"It isn't necessary to read them all through to guess at their purport," said the wife, confusedly. "But do look them over, Reid. See what these journals say!"

Mr. Westcourt took the papers and attentively perused the paragraphs referring to his daughter's suitor, and then looked at the imprints of the journals.

"Those notices go for nothing," he then declared. "The editors can be easily imposed upon by a regular swindler. It's no proof of the man's being a prince. If the other documents are of the same sort, I shall lose no time in pursuing Oriana."

Looking over the remaining papers, his brow cleared, and he finally remarked:

"These are evidently genuine! There can be no doubt about his being a prince—none whatever!"

Mrs. Westcourt looked delighted, and replied, incautiously:

"Oh, Reid, I am so glad! How charming it will be to have our daughter a princess—the Princess Villetsy! She will be a court belle, I am convinced of it! And the prince is so handsome, with such a delicious foreign accent—that is," she added, recovering her prudence, "I suppose he must be. Foreign princes always are!"

The merchant did not notice how nearly his wife had betrayed her acquaintance with the "prince," being absorbed in his own thoughts, of which he showed the tenor by remarking:

"If the prince were distinguished for his patriotism and for fighting against Russia, how does it happen that he is permitted to retain these immense estates and salt-mines? I should have thought that such valuable property would have been confiscated!"

"Oh, the explanation is simple. His mother took good care to side with the enemy, in order to keep the property in the family, and she has never been disturbed in her possession. Indeed, the Russian government has promised the old princess that she shall always be treated with the utmost consideration, for they are very anxious to win the prince to their side. So long as he retains his patriotism for his native land he must remain an exile, but the moment he is ready to clasp his enemies' hands in friendship he will receive an enthusiastic welcome home!"

"Then I shall advise him to give up his foolish notions of patriotism!" declared the merchant, highly elated. "Who would ever have believed that our Oriana would have become a real princess? It seems almost incredible. She has kept her secret well, Isabella, but I should have thought you would have discovered it!"

Mrs. Westcourt coloured in a manner that excited her husband's suspicions, and he exclaimed:

"You have seen this prince, Isabella! You need not deny it! Are you a party to this elopement? And have you combined with your daughter to deceive me, the husband and father?"

"I don't deny that I have seen the prince, Reid."

"You have seen him, then. Why have I not known of this?"

As the merchant thus spoke he arose and walked to and fro, angrily.

"You were absent from home, my dear, on that business to Fossil Cottage," answered Mrs. Westcourt, deprecatingly. "And then I could not tell you while our guests were at the lodge. I persuaded Oriana to wait until after this business of Reginald's was in some way settled, but it was of no use for her to wait after Reginald's engagement to Willis Heath was known."

The merchant was nearly choked with passion at the thought of the deception that had been practised upon him, and his wife thought it best to relate the whole affair as it had occurred, adorning it with a few embellishments that added materially to the effect of the story, and she succeeded in eventually calming him, even restoring him to good-humour.

"Well," he said, "I am glad that one of us has seen him. But you ought not to have kept it secret from me. Does he look exactly as you would expect a prince to look?"

"Yes—only even more princely. Oh, he is so charming, Reid, so perfectly delightful. And he gave me such a magnificent diamond ring—quite a princely gift. See."

She drew from her pocket the ring Villetsy had given her and handed it to her husband.

"It is magnificent," he remarked, examining it. "I should have thought you would have worn it to-day."

Mrs. Westcourt replied that she had done so, but removed it from her finger on her return home, for obvious reasons.

"But I cannot see what necessity existed for keeping me uninformed of the secret," said Mr. Westcourt, returning the trinket.

"Why, Reid, the prince said that he would never marry a poor girl lest her motives in becoming his bride should be mercenary, and he thought Oriana had a great fortune in her own right. It was the best thing they could do under the circumstances, for when Oriana is really and legally his wife it will make no difference whether she has a fortune or not from us. I think the affair has been very cleverly arranged."

Mr. Westcourt coincided in this opinion, when he had farther examined the prince's credentials and had farther talked with Mrs. Westcourt, and he even condescended to forgive his wife for her share in the deceit that had been practised upon him, in consideration of the brilliant future in store for his daughter.

"It's strange though, Isabella, that we never heard of the Prince Villetsy, isn't it?" he said.

"How could we expect to know of such great people when for years you have kept to your mercantile affairs and I have moved in the very obscure society to which our position confined us. We are now only beginning to live, Reid. Everybody else, of course, knows the prince, by reputation, at least. He moved in the very best society in the town where Oriana became acquainted with him, and he was quite an idol among all the old families which, even now, you and I cannot enter."

"We shall be able to do so when the prince and Oriana return," was the response. "I should like to hear farther particulars of their flight, as the story must come out to-day. Oriana has been missed ere this, and before dinner all sorts of stories will be in circulation unless we forestall them by telling the truth. The housekeeper must have been here when Oriana came for her trunk, and she may have already given her explanation."

At this moment a knock was heard at the door, and, on being bidden to enter, Mrs. Podley made her appearance, thus exemplifying the old adage.

"I hope you'll excuse me, sir and madam," she said, smoothing her black silk apron in a nervous manner, and speaking quite hurriedly, "but things have happened to-day in your absence which have made me anxious. I have told no one yet but my husband—Podley, the butler—and Mr. Aylmar, which is but right, he being the master. I wish to speak about Miss Westcourt."

"Speak freely," said Mr. Westcourt, quite pompously, remembering that he would soon be father-in-law to a prince. "Have no fears, Mrs. Podley, if that's your name."

The housekeeper bowed and proceeded:

"Some time before you came home, sir and madam, Miss Westcourt returned in a handsome carriage in company with a foreign-looking gentleman, his face covered with hair and his breast and hands with diamonds, and Miss Westcourt ordered the servants to bring down her trunk and put it at the back of the carriage. The foreign gentleman went upstairs for

Miss Westcourt's jewel-case, and carried it down himself, handling it very carefully, and then with the young lady's luggage they drove away. I couldn't detain them till your return, but I begged Miss Westcourt to remain. She refused, saying that it was all right—and I do hope it is—I feared that it was an elopement, and against your will, with some unsuitable person."

"It was an elopement, my good woman," said the merchant, loftily. "My daughter has eloped with a foreign prince, and by to-morrow night she will be a princess—the Princess Villetsy! I am greatly obliged to you for your consideration for my family, but rest assured that Miss Westcourt would never contract an unsuitable marriage, or one that would be distasteful to her parents."

"A princess!" repeated good Mrs. Podley, in bewilderment.

"A princess!" declared Mrs. Westcourt. "The bride of a Polish prince who has immense wealth. You may tell that fact to everyone who questions you in regard to Miss Westcourt's elopement."

The housekeeper looked greatly relieved, and soon withdrew to repeat the marvellous tale she had heard.

"And now, Isabella," said the merchant, "you had better dress and join the guests in the drawing-room. Put a few of those papers in your pocket to show and explain how well Oriana has done in her marriage and how entirely we are satisfied with her elopement, foolish and uncalled-for as it was. You can just mention that the cause of her elopement was a fear that I should insist upon her marriage with some other person. I will take the remaining papers to show to that old baronet. He understands the value of money pretty thoroughly, and will open his eyes, I imagine, at the sums mentioned in the steward's letters to the prince."

The matter being thus agreeably arranged, the merchant and his wife proceeded to attire themselves, and were about to descend to the drawing-room, when a servant entered bringing a message to the effect that Mr. Aylmar desired the presence of his guest in the library.

"I suppose he wants to talk again about Reginald's fortune," said the merchant, when the servant had departed. "His persistency is really very annoying. I don't intend giving a farthing to Reginald. I should be foolish if I did, now that his fortune is all in my hands, and he can't claim it."

Mrs. Westcourt re-echoed this sentiment, and her husband remarked:

"Still, I cannot disregard Mr. Aylmar's invitation, and must go to the library. I shall give him a decided reply this time that will for ever settle the matter. But perhaps he only wishes to inform me of Oriana's departure. Let me take you to the drawing-room first!"

He gave his arm to his wife and conducted her to the drawing-room, which she entered with a beaming face, finding herself regarded with inquiring looks, the story of Oriana's elopement having already gained circulation among the guests.

Glowing with pride and satisfaction, she seated herself to explain what she termed the facts, and the merchant made his way to the library, where Mr. Aylmar and Reginald awaited his coming.

"Are you acquainted, Mr. Westcourt, with the proceedings of your daughter?" asked the host, gravely. "I have reason to believe, from the statements of my housekeeper, that she has fled from your protection with a foreigner."

"I know it, Mr. Aylmar," interposed the merchant, assuming a grand manner. "She has eloped to Scotland with the Polish Prince Villetsy—a gentleman of untold wealth! I am perfectly satisfied with my daughter's conduct. She has contracted a most brilliant marriage!"

"I am glad that you are satisfied," said Mr. Aylmar, "but would it not be better to pursue the runaway couple? An elopement is hardly in keeping with the dignity of a prince, and he may be only a clever impostor. For the sake of your daughter's future it would be well to investigate—"

"No investigation is necessary, Mr. Aylmar," responded the merchant. "I have credentials from the prince that were left for my perusal, and they are so convincing that the most sceptical person could not doubt them. Will you look at them?"

Mr. Aylmar declined doing so, adding:

"I have no interest in the matter beyond a natural desire that Miss Oriana should not be duped into a marriage with an impostor who desires only her money. But it was not of your daughter that I desired most to speak, Mr. Westcourt!"

"If you intend making any more demands in behalf of Reginald, I decline to listen to them," said the merchant, glancing from his host to his nephew. "You will permit me to retire?"

"One moment more," said Mr. Aylmar, looking significantly at Reginald. "Since you decline enter-

taining any propositions in regard to Reginald's fortune, I have something to show you!"

Reginald obeyed the gesture of his friend by stepping back a few paces and removing a large embroidered cushion that stood near the centre of the room.

This movement revealed Mary Hayward, leaning back in an arm-chair, pale but composed.

At the sight of her the merchant started back as if mortally wounded, and uttered an involuntary cry that seemed to come from his very heart.

But a few minutes before he had been congratulating himself upon the security of his captive in her underground cell, and now here she was before him, surrounded by friends, and possessed with power to punish him for her abduction!

"She here!" he ejaculated, scarcely knowing what he said.

"Yes, Mr. Westcourt. Mary Hayward has escaped from the prison in which you confined her. Willa and Reginald discovered her locked up, while they were making explorations through the ruins, and they brought her home with them!"

"I—I never looked her up," faltered the merchant. "It's all a mistake! I know nothing about it!"

"You needn't perjure yourself by swearing to what you know to be false," responded Mr. Aylmar, sternly. "The law will decide as to your guilt!"

Mr. Westcourt trembled like a leaf in his agitation and excitement, and sat down, begging piteously for mercy.

"I wish," said Reginald, generously, "that you, Miss Hayward, would forbear, at least for the present, preferring any charge against the miserable man who has persecuted you. It may be misplaced kindness, but I venture to assert that he will not farther annoy or molest you!"

"Oh, never! never!" pleaded the merchant, his cowardly soul full of alarm. "Oh, Mary, dear Mary, forgive me, and don't say anything about what I have done! I acted on impulse in carrying you off, indeed I did!"

The meek and gentle Mary turned her face from the abject petitioner to Reginald, and said:

"I do not like to bring the name you bear, Mr. Reginald, into disgraceful notoriety, and I will, therefore, forego making any charge against Mr. Westcourt for my abduction!"

"Oh, thanks, ten thousand thanks!" said the merchant, with fulsome gratitude. "But Fennes and Mr. Fosdick, will they consent to your proposal?"

"They will leave the matter in my hands," was the reply. "But, Mr. Reginald," and the maiden turned towards him, "if those lost papers are ever restored to me, I shall not hesitate to use the confession against your relative, if the law will accept it as evidence!"

"You are right, Miss Hayward," answered Reginald, "and I should be the first to advise and assist you to use them to the best advantage!"

At this confirmation of Mary's statement as to the loss of all the documents that concerned him, the merchant drew a long breath of relief and permitted himself to be at last convinced of her truthfulness.

Concealing the exultation he experienced even in his degradation, he was about to repeat his thanks when his host said:

"After all that has passed, Mr. Westcourt, I cannot longer impose your society upon my guests. My carriage will be in readiness to conduct you to the railway station in time to meet the evening train!"

The merchant accepted this dismissal without a word, and retreated to his own room, burning with rage and mortification, which was not unrelieved by gleams of comfort and hope.

Ringling his bell, he summoned a servant, by whom he sent a pressing message to his wife, and she soon entered the room, full of alarm, demanding what had happened.

He informed her of their dismissal from the manor, and its cause, in as brief terms as possible, and, unheeding the fit of hysterics into which she was plunged by the news of Mary Hayward's escape from her prison, he proceeded to pack their trunk, throwing everything in without regard to order, and by the time Mrs. Westcourt had fully recovered the carriage was announced.

"Oh, dear!" declared the merchant's wife, with sobs. "I never can go through that corridor, and risk meeting all those people whom I have just been telling all about Oriana and the prince—I never can!"

Covering her face with a veil, and preceded by her husband, she made her way to the carriage, crouching back in her seat as they drove away, and she encountered the curious glances of half a dozen faces at the drawing-room windows.

The morning succeeding the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Westcourt from Aylmar Manor Wixon Fennes arrived, in company with Mr. Fosdick, who was very pale and thin, and seemed to have suffered from a very serious illness, consequent upon the utter prostration of his nervous system.

These visitors were ushered into the library, where they were received by Mr. Aylmar, who treated them both with the utmost consideration.

"We received a telegram from you, sir, last night," said Fennes, eagerly, declining the seat proffered him, "and have obeyed your summons, coming by the first available train. You have heard of Mary, Mr. Aylmar? Oh, do you know where she is? Tell me she is well and safe."

"She is, Mr. Fennes," responded the proprietor of the manor. "Calm yourself, I beg of you. She is not far from you—in fact, she is now my guest. She came to my house yesterday."

To describe the joy of Wixon Fennes at this assurance would be difficult.

Since his interview with the merchant he had entertained fears that his gentle betrothed was no longer living, and the assurance that she was now both alive and well caused him to burst into tears—almost the first he had shed since her abduction.

Mr. Fosdick shared his emotion, although in a lesser degree.

Struggling to recover his self-possession, Fennes began to make inquiries in regard to Mary's mysterious disappearance, but, before they could be answered, the gentle maiden herself entered the room and flew into his arms.

Mr. Aylmar retired upon her entrance, leaving the lovers to their joy, and their guardian to express his gratitude to the protecting power that had guarded her through all her perils and finally restored to him the darling of his old age.

(To be continued.)

STOPPING A HORSE.—A new method of stopping a horse has been suggested by an ingenious Frenchman. By means of a special contrivance attached to the bit the animal's nostrils may be taken hold of in an instant, and respiration being prevented, the horse must stop.

NOVEL WATCH FACE.—A watch without hands that shows on its face no figures but those which tell the hour and minute looked for, has recently been patented by a Mr. P. Barlow. The figures are displayed as they are wanted, and no other appears on the watch face.

THE VERY SMALLEST ELEPHANT.—One of the smallest elephants ever imported into England recently arrived at Liverpool in the ship *Bird*, from Rangoon. This curiosity is only three feet high and very docile, and, on its way up from the ship to the house of the naturalist who bought it, went into a public-house, and, inserting the end of its trunk into a jug of beer that was on the bar counter, sucked up the contents, much to the surprise of those present.

JULES GERARD.—The Hon-hunter, Jules Gérard, was killed by the greedy natives on his way from the west coast of Africa, through Timbuctoo, to the French colony of Algiers. The stout-hearted little fellow was overcome by numbers, tied to a stone and flung into the river, where his body has been found. Unaccountable delays in supplying particulars respecting the cause of his death have hitherto prevented our learning his sad fate.

DISCOVERY OF TWO SKELETONS NEAR CAEN.—In the midst of a tuft of bushes of an extraordinary thickness in the forests of Cinglais, near Caen, the skeletons of a horse and its rider, and a long rust-eaten lance lying close by, have been discovered. An examination has led to the conclusion that the remains are those of a Cossack and his steed. The supposition is that the animal, being wounded, fell with its rider into the thicket, which lies low, and that they were unable to extricate themselves.

FOOD OF NATIONS.—Dried dates are used by the Syrians as food; chestnuts by the Spaniards. The lotus seed is collected by the natives of the White Nile. Wheat is exchanged by the growers of Northern Africa for millet, as this is considered a more heating food—in fact, millet should be adopted by all cold-country travellers, as it is naturally better suited for such climates, just as rice is used instead of wheat in hot climates, and corn in moist regions, with its extract spirit, or whiskey. The question of the food of various nations has not been sufficiently studied; it would afford subjects of great interest to the ethnologist as well as the physiologist.

EFFECTS OF THE DAMP IN THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.—The damp, we are told, is playing havoc with the eight frescoes in the Upper Waiting Halls of the Houses of Parliament. They cost the country some 500*l.* each, but are now literally crumbling away from the wall. Sir W. Hayter's picture of the House of Commons on its meeting after the passing of the first Reform Bill, which cost the nation a large sum of money, hangs in an obscure committee-room, where the damp rising from the river daily impairs

its colouring. There are plenty of vacant spaces in the building where it could be placed with advantage, and where the colouring of the picture would, at the same time, be preserved. Two new frescoes are ready for placing in the Peers' Lobby, but it has been decided to defer fixing them until the Easter recess.

POLITENESS.

In our intercourse with the world this species of civility is imperative. We possess no right to give offence, by language or actions, to others, and we are bound to conduct ourselves agreeably to the reasonable and set rules of society. Civilized society has, in the course of time, instituted certain rules in the code of politeness which, though of little actual value, it is everyone's duty to learn, because, by knowing and acting upon them, we can make life glide on much more smoothly and pleasantly than if we remained in ignorance of them.

It is incumbent upon everyone to be courteous or respectful in his intercourse with neighbours, acquaintances, or with the public generally. To inferiors speak kindly and considerately, so as to relieve them from any feeling of being beneath you in circumstances; to equals be plain and unaffected in manner; and to superiors show becoming respect, without, however, descending to subservience or meanness. In short, act a manly, courteous, and inoffensive part in all the situations in life in which you may be placed. Society has ordained modes of address, and certain exterior signs of respectfulness, which it behoves us to support and personally attend to.

By attention to the rules such as we have alluded to the poorest man will be entitled to the character of a gentleman, and by inattention to them the most wealthy individual will be essentially vulgar. Vulgarity signifies coarseness or indelicacy of manner, and is not necessarily associated with poverty or lowliness of condition. Thus an operative artisan may be a gentleman, and worthy of our particular esteem; while an opulent merchant may be only a vulgar clown, with whom it is impossible to be on terms of friendly intercourse. We say, cultivate politeness of manner, by all means, for it is refined civility, and will spare both ourselves and others much unnecessary pain.

GREAT attention is being paid to the security of the Houses of Parliament against fire, by the removal of needless combustible matter, and by securing a good supply of water to every part, the ceilings especially.

DR. ORI, an African traveller of some reputation in Italy, has returned to Milan from Soudan, or Soodan, embracing the countries along the south frontier of the Great Desert of Sahara. He has brought with him a very rich botanical collection, part of which will be sent to the Paris Exhibition.

NICE just now presents an epitome of the "great itself." On the 1st instant its foreign population consisted of 123 Germans, 200 Americans, 486 English, 3 Brazilians, 16 Belgians, 7 Danes, 11 Spaniards, 415 French, 2 Greeks, 8 Dutch, 1 Hungarian, 42 Italians, 7 Moldo-Wallachians, 8 Turks, 11 Poles, 180 Russians, 5 Swedes, 21 Swiss—altogether 1,495.

A METEOR of extraordinary size was seen at Uzeste a short time since. The *Gleaner* of Bordeaux states that at about 7 in the evening three persons on the road between Préchac and Villandraut perceived this enormous meteor passing over them, and were terrified at its fiery aspect. In its transit it dropped numerous sparks, traces of which were found in holes being burnt in the umbrellas which those persons carried.

A CURIOUS INTERRUPTION.—At Frankfort, a few evenings ago, Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice" was being played, and when, in the trial scene, the judge asked "Shylock" what he claimed from his debtor, and the latter replied, "A pound of flesh," a man in the gallery cried out, "And eight cigars." The Frankfort people applauded this allusion to the Prussian bill of fair during the war; the Prussians present lost their temper; a row ensued, and the police cleared the house.

AT what risk to their own lives those on shore rendered assistance to the men who were in danger of drowning in Regent's Park may be guessed by the appearance of one of them, John O'Donnell, who recently appeared at the Marylebone Police Court to make a statement of his position. The magistrate asked him what made him shake so much, and he said he had been in his wet clothes an hour and a half, and had felt benumbed ever since. His right side was now completely paralyzed, and he could not keep his arm still. This poor fellow, a bricklayer's labourer, had brought out eight persons alive.



[LORD EDGAR OBTAINS INFORMATION AT THE HOSTELRY.]

SWEET BRIAR COTTAGE.

CHAPTER XI.

THE day broke gloriously, and the morning gave no tidings of the darkness and gloom of the past night. The sun came up in the East through soft lines of pearly tinted clouds; and, as it mounted higher and higher, its clear light shining on the wet earth, each dewy, glistening blade of grass seemed a sparkling diamond fit for the coronet of a queen.

Over the open country and over the crowded city it rose in undimmed splendour; brightening up lordly castles and humble cottage homes; carrying light and warmth in its beams, and gilding all with a touch of purest gold; and as its course went upward, the hours of the day wore on.

It was after mid-day when from the elegant mansion of one of England's proudest peers there was conducted a solemn funeral cortege. And that day, throughout London, it was known that this nobleman and his beautiful young wife had lost their first-born child—son and heir to their vast estates.

The stately house was shrouded in morning; the shutters were closely drawn; heavy crape hung from the door knobs outside, while within there was even more token of grief; the heavy curtains were folded closely over the windows, that no light might glimmer through, and mock, with its brightness, the sorrow which seemingly reigned throughout and enshrouded the mourners like a heavy pall.

The bells were muffled, and the carpets gave back no sound to the foot; but those who entered trod lightly; for it was said that the mourning mother lay very ill in her apartment, and could not come down to look again upon the face of her dead child.

The jewelled casket for the little one was placed in one of the large drawing-rooms, upon a marble table in the centre of the room. It was nearly covered with beautiful white buds and blossoms, which were wreathed around it, arranged with artistic skill and grace. The little white, still, death-cold face and form lay within—a sweet, smiling babe—with a look, as if caught from the angels, resting upon its tender lips and features.

The chief mourner, a dark-browed man—the apparently heart-broken father—was to follow to the burial-place, the family tomb of his fathers.

At the sunset of an early June day Lord Edgar

Clemonsford alighted at the door of a neat, inviting-looking French hostelry in the province of Normandy.

"Can I tarry for the night?" he asked of the landlord, who stood within the shaded porch; and straightway his answer came from the brisk, pretty woman who emerged from the open door, courtesying as she spoke:

"Oui, monsieur!" And in a minute more she had turned and hurried to the kitchen, to stir up her maids with the tidings that a great English millor had deigned to honour the little inn with his presence.

Meanwhile, the new comer had directed his man William to bring in his portmanteau and dressing-case; then he went to the neat chamber assigned him, to brush off the dust of travel and bath.

Presently a knock came at the door; and William opened it, to see the landlord bowing on the threshold.

"At what hour will my lord have his supper?" was the query, given with another obsequious bow.

"As soon as it can be got ready," was Lord Edgar's reply; and then he returned to his toilet, remarking to his valet:

"Our host's English is as good as yours. I wonder where he picked it up in these secluded parts, where our countrymen do not venture often? I should not be so surprised to hear such a correct accent in Paris."

William could furnish no solution of the question, however; and during supper, at which his landlord waited, Lord Edgar inquired:

Where did you get such a good acquaintance with my mother tongue, mine host? I should take you to be an Englishman, instead of a Frenchman."

"And you have surmised rightly, for I am English born; though, for the last twenty years, I haven't crossed the channel," was the answer.

"English born! And pray how can you be so contented here?" asked the nobleman.

"Ask Floretta! she can explain it to your lordship," replied mine host, casting a glance at his still comely, and scarce middle-aged wife, who lingered at a side table covered with dainties prepared for their visitor's supper.

"Ah! I need not question your handsome wife. Her bright eyes tell the story—how you were won from English to French soil," rejoined Lord Edgar, with a smile; while the landlady acknowledged the compliment with a pleased, half-coquettish courtesy.

"I ought, rather, to ask madam's pardon for thus wondering," he added, gallantly.

Half an hour later, while William was discussing his own supper after his master had left the little dining-room, Lord Edgar sat upon the pleasantly cool porch; and, after gazing at the vineyards lying in the yellow glow of the lingering sunset rays, and listening to the birds twittering their evening songs as they fluttered round and round their nests in the trees close by the low-roofed, picturesque inn, he again took up the thread of conversation with his host, who loitered near the wide-open door.

"And so you were born in England, my good friend?" he asked.

"Yes, my lord; and bein' as you're the first o' my own gentry I've met this many a month, maybe your lordship won't take offence if I've been asking your man all about the old country and the news that's going on there," replied the landlord, respectfully.

"Oh, no! I am glad to hear you talk myself, and I daresay you have found William ready to do his share," said the nobleman. "What part of the country did you come from?"

"I was born in Hampshire, my lord, but bein' an orphan and standin' alone, I went up to London when a mite of a lad, and after knockin' round a good deal got a prime place as waitin'-man with his lordship the old Earl of Brandock. Maybe if ever you was in London yourself, or had folks there, you've heard of my lord the earl; that is, maybe they've spoken of him to you, for he's been dead now these sixteen or seventeen year—the old earl has, though p'raps his sons be livin'?" and the man asked this question with considerable earnestness in his tone.

"Yes, I know the present Earl of Brandock well. His wife is my own cousin—the Lady Jane Clemonsford," replied Lord Edgar, with much interest in his host, adding, "This is a singular occurrence—meeting here, in this quiet village, one who has been attached to a family with whom I have become connected. But why did you leave the old earl's service? Ah! I forgot. It was Floretta's bright eyes that lured you away," he said, smilingly.

"Yes, your lordship; that is true," rejoined the landlord, returning the smile, "for 'Madame' Fielding, as she calls herself, though I say she is but simple 'Dame'—Madame was then my lady's, the countess's waiting-maid; and a trimmer, tidier Abigail never tripped up the great staircase of the grand old house in London. Does the young earl bide there yet, my lord?"

"Yes; the present Earl of Brandock lives in the home of his fathers in Grosvenor Square," was Lord Edgar's reply, he smiling meantime to hear the old man, whose years had reached nearly threescore, dubbed by his youthful title.

"And is it grand as ever?" asked his companion. "Grand, I should say, than in your day," replied Lord Edgar, "for the present earl had it completely refitted and remodelled when he took home his beautiful young wife. He has a large revenue from funded property which came with the other estates, and he is counted one of the wealthiest peers of the realm."

"Lord Hubert always loved money, to show and to spend," said the man, positively, with a darkened expression on his face. "I knew him well, my lord—a bold, ambitious man, who wanted his old father out of the way years ago, so he might come into the earldom—always like his brother, Master Clarence."

"I have heard that the two were very unlike always," rejoined the nobleman. "And the present earl was not a young man when his father died—was he?"

"Lord! no, your honour! Lord Hubert was forty, if he was a day, while Master Clarence was full fifteen or twenty years younger. You see, my lord, the old earl had two wives; and Master Clarence was the son of his father's old age, and his mother, my lady, was one of the sweetest ladies in all England; while Lord Hubert was bad, and proud, and black-hearted, they said, from his cradle."

"You don't seem to hold a very exalted opinion of my lady cousin's husband," said Lord Clensford, with a smile, noting the man's earnestness.

"I forget that 'twas your honour's relations I was talking about; but, beggin' pardon, I must stick to my word all the same," said the landlord, more doggedly. "For, your honour, while John Fielding was body servant to the old earl for five long years, he had many a chance to see my Lord Hubert in his tantrums—and his mind hasn't changed about him to this day!" and the man brought down his hand emphatically.

Lord Edgar smiled anew at his host's judgment, and voted it the fruit of a correct observation, since it accorded so well with the opinion of many who knew the earl intimately at the present day; and he involuntarily sighed—as he had sighed many and many a time before—that it was into the hands of such a hard, cold, stern man the happiness of his still dear, and once worshipped cousin had been given.

"This honest but simple-minded fellow has come to a pretty correct conclusion," was his mental comment. But had Lord Edgar known what thoughts were working in John Fielding's brain he would have pronounced him anything but "simple-minded" then.

"It's goin' on close to seventeen year now since the old earl died," the landlord said.

"Were you with him at that time?" asked Lord Clensford.

"Yes, your honour; I stayed with him to the last; and then, again, that Floretta had no objection to leavin' my lady's service, and had half coaxed me into bringin' her home to France to see her parents and the old vineyards again. I took my little purse of carmin's, and we two, after gettin' made one, crossed the channel; and then, after the old folks died, Floretta and I kept up the little inn here, and raised a few acres of grapes down in the valley yonder! You say my Lord Hubert—beg pardon—the young earl, married one of your kinsfolks. Your lordship would know, then, how many children they have about them?" and John Fielding asked this question with breathless interest veiled under the apparent carelessness of the inquiry.

"My cousin is unfortunate in being childless," replied Lord Edgar. "One was born to them in the first year of their marriage, but lived only a few hours, I have been told. It was a great stroke; for if the child had lived—and being a boy—it would have maintained the family honours."

"Yes, my Lord Hubert and his lady must a been cut up," said the landlord. "And your honour says there be no children now?"

"No. They never had another."

Lord Clensford did not see the flash of the eye of his host, nor mark the eagerness of his following question:

"And how many years is it since my Lord Hubert married your honour's cousin?"

"It is full sixteen, I think; yes, nearly seventeen, I am quite sure," the nobleman replied. "It was within a year after the earl's death."

Again that triumphant flash lit up the eyes of John Fielding; and he turned and walked across the porch to hide his nervous exultation.

It must have been more than ordinary curiosity to know the fortunes of the old family with whom he had once served that caused him to follow up the career of the present earl so closely, and to mutter as he did under his breath:

"Fifteen years, and Lord Hubert without children! The time has come! The time has come!"

But he calmed his agitation of manner and tone, and turned back, to ask, in an ordinary voice:

"And Master Clarence! I wonder does your lordship know anything about him? He was a born gentleman, Master Clarence was, and always had a soft-spoken word for a servant, while Lord Hubert flouted at 'em as though they were slaves," and his eye grew dark, as if some memory of wrong were evoked.

"I presume that the younger brother is still rector of a quiet country parish in the north of England,—for he was so when I left home some short time since," replied Lord Clensford. "I have always heard him spoken of as a most estimable man, though I fancy that the two never had much in common, the earl being busy all the time with his public life. He is a great politician, I ought to tell you, and very ambitious."

"Yes, yes, I understand. The old Evil One himself never had more plots to contrive than my Lord Hubert when I knew him—and I'll be bound he's only got deeper in as he got older. But I ought to beg pardon, my lord, seein' as how he's married to your honour's cousin."

"Oh, no apologies are required, my good friend," rejoined Lord Edgar, with a smile. "Only have a care that my dear relative, the countess, cannot be implicated in these aspersions, for she is one of the noblest women in all England."

"Yes, my lord," replied Fielding, understanding the purport of the nobleman's words, though I doubt much if the honest fellow cared greatly when he made his excuses.

"And when does your lordship set out to go home again?" he asked. "Your man has been telling me that it's a long journey you've had since you set out from your castle."

"Yes, I have been absent for a longer period than I thought to be when I set out on my wanderings—but now many weeks will not pass before I shall be at home once more. There's no spot like old England, after all, my good friend!" replied Lord Edgar.—"And I wonder that even your comely dame's bright eyes can keep you from paying it a visit."

"I shall have to go over, I expect, before long," answered John Fielding. "I've got a little errand to do in London some day; and I shouldn't wonder, one whit, if I'd get across the channel some time, almost afore I knewed it."

"That's right. And, when you do, come up to Clensford Castle, my good friend, and you shall not want for a supper or lodging," said the nobleman, good-humouredly, rising, and he walked up and down the porch, adding:

"But I feel tired now, and would like to test the bed you have to offer me."

Ere long Lord Edgar was sound in slumber upon the clean-spread bed of the little Norman hostelry; but his host, busy with a package of old time-stained papers taken from a cabinet, held one, which he drew forth from its secure depths, and, poring over its contents, muttered, in exultant tones:

"'Twas no' great—the schoolin' I got at the village school in Hampshire, but I've managed, afore now, to read this; and now the time's come! His lordship's comin' here, to my own doors, has saved me the trouble o' sendin' to London and huntin' up affairs. It seems as if the finger o' Providence pinte'd him right here. And, as I told his lordship, I've got a little errand to do in London!" and he carefully re-folded the paper, and locked it in the cabinet.

CHAPTER XII

It was the morning following that on which the letters had been received announcing the speedy return of Lord Clensford and young Enoch Heath; and in castle and cottage there were alike active preparations for the absent one's return.

Up at the castle the maids and serving-men were busy with their tasks of setting everything to rights to greet their lord's arrival, under the direction of the housekeeper, whose energies had long lain dormant for want of any stirring event at the castle. The rooms were thrown open and aired, especially those in the wing of the house which were devoted to his lordship's use, and which had not been occupied since his departure three years previously. In her province the cook was concocting various nice

dishes, which she knew suited well her master's palate; while the grooms without rubbed down and combed the horses, till their sleek skins shone in polished coating.

In the eastern wing of the castle, in an apartment beaming the impress of woman's presence in its delicate appointments, sat the Lady of Brandock.

There were slight lines upon her brow, for sixteen years had rolled away since she swayed the sceptre of girlhood beauty; yet there were the same delicate loveliness and grace in feature and mien; and, as she sat there in her dainty morning-robe of blue silk, which fell in soft folds around her slender figure, she looked almost as lovely as when we first saw her, years before, when, clad in her riding-habit and sweeping plumes, she rode forth from the castle to join in the deer-hunt in her cousin's forests.

In truth, the Lady Jane had not yet seen thirty-five years, and was still very beautiful. The old restless fire of her eye had been subdued, and given place to a gentler light; and her quiet manner now won the heart more than the old impulsive bearing of her girlhood.

On this morning she was holding a letter in her hands, which she had apparently just received, for she laid it upon the little table of mosaic work beside her, and said aloud:

"My cousin Edgar will be here to-night. The earl writes that he has seen him in London; and now I shall be compelled to return thither again, to take my place by my husband's side. Indeed, he has been very kind in allowing me to remain away so long. He has been thoughtful in many things since our marriage. It is, perhaps, proper that I should go, even before I look upon my cousin again. But, alas, how can I leave the child? My lovely, my gentle, my own Jennie! How can I leave thee in thy simple peasant home? Why not take thee, instead, to the station to which thou wast born—and fondle and love thee as my own dearly beloved daughter? But I must go back alone, and lead a gay life, while my heart remains here with those I love. I must go! I must go!" and the lady uttered these words with eyes fast filling with tears, and in accents that were full of deepest grief.

Thus she sat for many minutes, with bowed head and frown, and noticed not the entrance of the young peasant girl Jennie Heath at the open door leading into the garden. Not until the maiden knelt before her, and took one of her hands with a gentle caress, did the lady observe her presence.

"I have come, Lady Jane, as you desired last night when you called at our cottage. But, my dear lady, why do you weep? You are unhappy. You are going away from the castle. Oh, do not go back to London! Do not leave us—for there is no one else who can be to me the dear, kind friend and instructor that you have ever been. Oh, I shall miss you so! Say that you will not leave the castle and go back to your old home!" And the girl's voice and manner told the truth of her words as she knelt on a low seat before her benefactress.

The Lady Jane gently stroked the soft shining tresses of the pleader, and then, raising her up, said, in accents which were low and tremulous:

"My dear Jennie, my child, you must not feel thus. If I should be compelled to leave you within a short period after Lord Edgar returns it will be for the best. Could I take you with me I would do so, but that is not possible. You will be provided with suitable teachers, and you must still strive to improve as if I were with you; and always remember that, though I am not near you, there will not be one hour of the days that pass but I shall think of my sweet young friend Jennie, whom I love as a child, in her quiet, pleasant home."

"And, be assured, that if you must go, my dear friend and teacher, that I shall pray, night and morning, for your happiness!" said the girl as she arose and imprinted a kiss upon the hand she still retained, adding, "I will not remain for a lesson this morning, for my mother bade me hasten back home as there is much to be done ere Brother Enoch arrives."

"Then I will not attempt to detain you," replied Lady Jane as she arose and drew the girl to her and for one moment enfolded her in her arms, then, gently touching her brow with her lips, said:

"You will come again to-morrow, child, and every day until I leave the castle."

"Yes, if you wish it; but there will be company here then. Lord Edgar will have arrived, and my presence might be unwise," replied Jennie.

"Oh, no! Come all the same. Our cousin has been long away, and will wish to see his little friend whom he used to fondle and think so much

of," said the lady, "and, besides, your brother comes with him. We must see you both often at the castle!" she added.

And so, promising to come every day to the castle, the girl arose to leave; but the lady to whom she felt so strongly and strangely attached recalled her, saying:

"Tarry a moment, Jennie! I will walk with you as far as your cottage. I have not yet been out for my morning ramble."

A few moments later the two walked down the broad avenue, into the highway bordered with hedges, taking the path to the cottage.

A stranger, looking at them, would have said that, notwithstanding the difference in dress, there was a strange similarity in form and feature between the high-bred lady and the humble peasant maid.

As they walked through the cool, bordered path leading towards the cottage home of the girl they were met by Lionel Kingsley, who was slowly sauntering along as if for the enjoyment of the sweet morning air.

As the young man passed them, and beheld Jennie Heath, the peasant girl, walking familiarly beside the Lady Jane Brandock, he bit his lips and felt vexed that it should be thus; for he had, himself, come out expressly to meet the girl, and have another interview ere he returned to London.

But, as he passed them, there was no emotion perceptible in his smiling, handsome face; and, with the most courtly and reverential of salutations he acknowledged the meeting.

He had gone but a short distance beyond hearing when the Lady Jane, turning to her companion, said:

"I see, my child, that you meet Lionel Kingsley as a friend. Have you known him long—and where did the acquaintance commence?"

"It is but a short time since we met, my lady—since he came here, a month ago. We met in this very path we are now in. I was out one morning, with my crayons and sketch-book, and was taking the view of the castle which we have from here, when a stranger, who it seems was this Lionel Kingsley, whom your ladyship knows, stopped in the path and begged permission to look upon my work. I had been so busy with my sketching that I had not noticed his approach, and I think he must have stood there regarding me some time," said the girl, naively. Then she added, "I could not well refuse the politely uttered request, and so held up the etching for his gaze; and that is the way we met, Lady Jane."

"And have you not met him since till this morning?" inquired the lady again.

"Oh, yes; I have often in my walks to and from the castle seen him, and he has always had something to say or a bouquet of sweet flowers to give to me. On the first morning he spoke of London as his home, and said that he had left it for a brief period for the restoration of his health, which had been impaired by too close application to business. He is stopping at the Golden Cross—the inn down at the village. But I suppose you know that, and may have seen him at the castle ere this, for he seems to know your ladyship well!" said the girl.

"Yes, I do know Lionel Kingsley well, from report; and I know no good of him, my sweet girl!" said Lady Jane, in slightly agitated tones. "I hope, dear Jennie, that you have not found his society too pleasant, and that it would be no hardship for you to give it up, were it necessary?" she asked, with interest.

Jennie Heath looked up, slightly astonished at the words and tones of the lady; but she replied, quickly:

"No, no, Lady Jane. Lionel Kingsley is nothing to me but the merest acquaintance. 'Tis true we have often met in our walks during the past month; but I have never sought or cared for his coming, and never thought of him but as a friend."

"And you are sure you know your heart, and there is no love there for this handsome young man?" questioned the lady again.

"Yes, as sure as that I am in your presence now," replied the girl. "For had I cared aught for him should I believe your ladyship's words, which imply that he is a man of many minds, and has a heart for every new face that pleases him?" replied Jennie Heath.

"Thank heaven, then! I feared it might be otherwise," uttered Lady Jane, fervently. Then continuing, she said, "You are an innocent child of nature and know nothing of the wickedness and depravity of the great world which lies outside your cottage home, and it would not be strange if a handsome face should fascinate one of your tender years. But I see you have been kindly saved this fate, and I am only too thank-

ful that it is so; for this young man would only play his part in order to amuse himself during his stay at the Golden Cross to make the time pass less heavily on his hands, and then when he returns to London he would speedily forget his little country friend in the society of other ladies, for whom he would again array himself in bright smiles and flatteries. You are not offended with me, my child, for telling you these things so plainly?" said the lady as she concluded.

"No, oh no, my dear Lady Jane! On the contrary, I thank you very much for the kind interest you manifest in my welfare. Do not fear. I do not love Lionel Kingsley, though he has, I think, tried to win my love. But even had I any regard for him your words would have driven it from my heart."

"My own heart is at rest then, dearest child. What you have said has taken a load from it," replied Lady Jane.

They walked some little distance farther to a curve in the path, when the lady stopped.

"I will not walk farther this morning," she said, "for I have preparations to make ere I go back to London, which I shall do in a few days. But you must come every day until I depart."

"Yes, dear lady, I will surely do so; for I shall be jealous of every hour I spend away from your presence now you are about to go so soon, and it may be a long time ere you return to the castle again!"

"I would that I could only take you with me, sweet Jennie, to my London home!" said the lady, "yet I shall come to see you as often as possible." And, with a tender kiss upon the young girl's forehead, her ladyship turned to go back to the castle.

But Jennie had gone but a short distance after leaving Lady Brandock before she was joined by Lionel Kingsley, who had turned back for that purpose.

"Good-morning, sweet Jennie!" he said as he came up to her. "This is a charming day, and I perceive it has tempted you to an early ramble."

The young girl replied coolly to the salutation, and then hastened her steps towards home.

"I pray you, sweet maid, do not hurry; for this will be our last interview for the present," said the young man. "I came hoping to meet you in your morning walk to the castle; and had been so long in waiting when I saw you approach with Lady Brandock that it seemed to me an age. But I am glad you have come at last."

"And why should you be glad that I have come?" she asked. "Surely there is no pleasure to you in the society of an humble village maid. You will return to London and forget her, even in a shorter space of time than the acquaintance has been formed."

"You judge me harshly, lovely girl. 'Tis you who will quickly forget me in the society of him you call your adopted brother, Enoch Heath," said the young man.

"Have you been to the cottage and seen my parents?" the girl suddenly asked.

"No, oh no!" and as he uttered this Lionel Kingsley felt a little of embarrassment at the question, for it brought up their interview of the previous evening.

"Then I cannot linger by the way to listen to you!" said Jennie, firmly. "I must leave you, for I am wanted at home."

"Oh, Jennie, sweet one, do not leave me thus! Your coldness and indifference will drive me to distraction. Did I not say that I must return to London to-night? An unexpected summons takes me there; and I shall be compelled to tear myself from all the sweet enjoyments of this pleasant little village, not the least of which has been the society of your dear self," ejaculated the youth, in a voice which seemed filled with grief.

"Mr. Kingsley, no more of this!" uttered the girl, in a firm, clear voice. "This is an old story to you, and my ears wish not to receive it. When you return to London thoughts of Jennie Heath will fade quickly away; then do not seek to make me believe it will be otherwise." And, with a graceful bend of her little head, Jennie Heath turned from him and hastened towards the cottage, which was now in view.

As she left him Lionel Kingsley's last words were, "Jennie, we may never meet again, but I shall always continue devoted to your sweet memory!"

These words Jennie heard as she turned and hastened from him; but she did not hear those which followed, and which he uttered in a low, half-mocking tone:

"Ha! that face is ever! We shall never meet

again; for 'twould be a dangerous game to trifle with Enoch Heath's sister!"

Then he turned his steps towards the sign of the Golden Cross, venting muttered imprecations upon his ill luck with the last game he had undertaken by the way.

That night Lionel Kingsley set out for London. The day passed on, and it was nightfall at castle and cottage, and the carriage containing Lord Edgar Clensford and young Enoch Heath came in sight. First it stopped at the cottage, and Enoch Heath alighted, and was welcomed home by his parents and sweet, shy Sister Jennie.

Lord Edgar witnessed the greeting from the carriage window, and said, half sadly, to himself:

"There will be no parents, nor wife, nor sweet sister, to be glad at my coming. Enoch Heath is more blessed to-day in the true love found in his parents' humble cottage than I beneath my tarred, massive castle walls! And it will ever be thus with me; for there was but one who could have given me this blessing, and she is wedded to another!"

Thus thinking gloomily, the carriage bore him on; and the nobleman was set down at the door of his own stately ancestral home.

CHAPTER XIII.

A WEEK had scarcely elapsed after the return of Lord Edgar Clensford to his castle and Enoch Heath to his cottage home, and the Countess of Brandock was ready to set out for London.

It was on the morning of the sixth day after his lordship's arrival that he and his cousin sat at breakfast alone, the housekeeper being confined to her room from a severe attack of rheumatism, which had been brought on by her unwearied efforts about the house in anticipation of her master's coming; and so Lady Jane had remained a few days longer than she anticipated, and now took the place of Dame Bertha at her host's table.

As the nobleman gazed upon his yet beautiful cousin, so pale and quiet in her matured loveliness, so dignified, and yet so sweetly womanly, he felt the old youth-time emotions springing up in his breast; yet since that time when he had professed his best manly love and been refused he had never allowed himself to dream sweet dreams, such as he saw fulfilled in the lives of other men around him, who were possessed of wives, home and happiness.

"Did Lady Jane love her husband?" he had oftentimes questioned himself. "Why was she content to live apart from him so readily? Why, if she had grown to love and honour the man she had wedded, could she remain away from him and find much less happiness in the separation?" And the nobleman grew perplexed and abstracted; then, somehow, the memory of the past stole over him—those days of innocent, youthful pleasure, when he had played beside his sweet young cousin, and there had been no restricting bar to separate their enjoyments. Then his mind went onwards, recalling each successive year as it rolled into the past. He thought of the time when he had saved Lady Jane's life—of the fearful peril of that morn, and shuddered at the recollection. Then his own love words to her came back—her rejection of his suit—and, later, her marriage to the Earl of Brandock. Then the time rolled on again; and there was nothing to interrupt the even flow of his life at the castle, till that night of wild storm when he had accompanied young Enoch Heath to his home, and they both beheld the founding child which had been left at the threshold of the good yeoman's cottage.

At this point Lord Edgar's thoughts found utterance as he said to his companion:

"'Tis very strange that Enoch Heath should have obtained no clue to the child which was left them so long ago! The girl is very lovely, and looks not like a cottage maid. But what ails you, Lady Jane? You are suddenly ill!" said his lordship as he noticed the paleness and sudden tremor which had come over his cousin.

"It is nothing—only a strange flutter at my heart which will soon pass!" she replied. "I am overtaxed with the exertions made upon my return, and perhaps need rest!" she added.

"You should have resigned them to your maids, and not tasked your strength so much," said his lordship, with much solicitude. "Had you not better seek a little repose now, for you look strangely pale and wearied?"

"Yes, in a few moments I will go to my chamber," she replied; "but do not be alarmed about me, for this will soon pass," she added as she noted her cousin's anxiety of manner.

A little later, when the Lady Jane had left the breakfast-room and gone to her own apartment, Lord Edgar Clemsford went into the castle garden. As he was sauntering down one of its shadowed walks, midway its length, he paused, and gazed in admiration at the fair picture presented before him.

Jennie Heath, who was coming for her morning lesson, was near him. She had stepped aside from the path, and stood reaching up with one fair arm to pluck some crimson roses from a bush, which, with its brilliant blossoms, trailed up around a stunted marble goddess.

Lord Clemsford started, and gazed with admiring eyes upon the sweet picture.

The girl was indeed very lovely. Her little hat had fallen from her head, and a shower of golden curls swept around her young face, with its full scarlet lips and bright cheeks rivaling the hue of the roses she grasped in her white hands. Her short blue muslin skirt displayed the small slippered feet and slender ankles; and the white bodice, while it covered her rounded neck, revealed its graceful outline.

"A lovely picture!" exclaimed Lord Clemsford, as he stood still a moment in the path. "And her face is strikingly like the Lady Jane's was at this peasant girl's age!"

Jennie Heath here gave a little shriek, and let go the bush she held, and the roses she had gathered fell scattering to the ground.

Lord Clemsford quickly sprang forward.

"What is it, sweet girl? What has happened to you?" he asked.

She coloured, but held up her arm whence the sleeve had fallen back, and replied:

"I felt a sharp pain in my arm, my lord. The thorns must have pierced it. Ah, how it pains me!" she said, in girlish impatience.

"Let me look at it!" said his lordship. "It may be that some insect, mistaking this white arm for a lily, settled upon it, and, in revenge at the mistake, left his sting behind. If so, I can soon relieve the pain, for I have a soothing lotion at the house, which is wonderful in its curative powers."

The girl raised her swollen arm, and Lord Edgar pronounced it stung by a wasp, bidding her enter the castle with him, he would soon relieve the pain.

"There, Miss Jennie, this is a sovereign remedy and will soon relieve you!" said his lordship as he brought a phial from his chamber to the drawing-room, where he had left the girl, and applied some of its contents to Jennie's arm.

"Thank you, my lord," she replied, raising her large blue eyes gratefully to his face; "I am sorry to have troubled you so much." Then she added, smilingly, "I stand condemned before you, as a pilferer of your garden; and, as it is not the first time I have been guilty of a similar act, 'tis but meet that my punishment should have thus come, even under your own gaze," and she blushed as she uttered these words.

"Say not so, little Jennie!" replied Lord Clemsford, in his turn feeling a little embarrassed at the ready words of this cottage girl. "It is no trespass for you to gather what you list. Were you not a protégée of my cousin Lady Brandock, and the sister of my dear friend Enoch Heath, still as the little friend I knew ere I went abroad you should feel assured that, whatever my garden or my castle contains is always at your service."

"Thank you, Lord Clemsford!" she replied, in gay, vivacious tones, not unlike those he remembered his lady cousin to have used to him in their early youth. "Thank you! I may take you at your word, then, and crave a boon now, even to the loan of your lordship for a while!" she added, laughingly.

Lord Clemsford raised his head in a little astonishment.

But before he had time to reply his companion had again spoken, with a merry smile about her lips.

"My request amazes you, I see, my lord. But I will hasten to explain its meaning, lest you should deem me too forward. My brother Enoch is, to-day, confined to the house with a lame foot, which he got yesterday when walking with your lordship. You will recollect that, in attempting to spring over a wall, he slipped, and a stone fell upon him, spraining his ankle. This morning he is unable to walk, and he desires me to seek you and ask your lordship to go to the cottage to finish the business you were adjusting together."

"I will go at once," said Lord Clemsford. "Shall I have your company back?" he asked. "That is, if you were intending to return immediately; or will you remain here till my return?"

"I will stay awhile, thank you! I would see Lady

Jane; for I shall soon be without my kind friend and instructor, and then I shall sadly miss her," she replied.

"You speak of my cousin's intention of returning to London?" asked Lord Clemsford.

"Yes, my lady told me of this even before your lordship arrived," said Jennie; then she added, naively, "Is it because the great Earl of Brandock is tired of being so long separated from his wife, and insists upon her return to the gay London world?"

"I do not know. But I ought not to doubt it if my cousin really desire to go," said his lordship. "Yet she is not strong enough for a gay life."

"Oh, I wish she would always remain here, then," cried the girl, enthusiastically. "Cannot you persuade her to do so, my lord?" she asked, earnestly.

"Nay, I am afraid not," he replied. "There are probably reasons why Lady Jane should go back—and the very first one is, that a wife should be with her husband. So you see that I advocate that woman's sphere is beside her liege lord; and if you should ever be married, little Jennie, I should tell you just the same," he said, so gaily that none would have suspected his sadness.

"But I wish the Countess Brandock had the right to always live at your castle, Lord Clemsford. The house will have lost its chief charm to me when she departs from it," said Jennie Heath as she turned away to seek her benefactress's apartment.

And, as Lord Clemsford went down the highway towards the cottage, the echo of the girl's words was sounding loudly in his heart, and he repeated these aloud as he murmured, passionately:

"Oh, would it were so! Would it could be that my cousin Jane had the right to remain at my castle as its rightful mistress. But this is wrong—and I must silence the wish." And, in gloomy thought, Lord Clemsford walked on till he reached the cottage door of his friend Enoch, where, by a mighty effort, he quelled his troubled brow and called a smile to his face ere he entered.

(To be continued.)

The greatest wonder in the State of Iowa is the "Walled Lake," which is three feet higher than the earth's surface, and occupies 1,900 acres. It has not yet been ascertained where the water comes from or where it goes to, yet it always remains fresh and clear.

THE Master of the Rolls has intimated his intention to put a stop to the eager and costly rivalry for the profitable business of winding up insolvent companies. He has accordingly announced his resolve not to allow the costs of special retainers out of the funds of any company being wound up. Where given they must be paid for out of the pockets of the party giving them.

INGENIOUS MODE OF IDENTIFICATION.—The Commissioners of the Paris Exhibition have hit upon a new mode of attesting the identity of season ticket-holders, who are, it seems, invited to send in two photographic portraits of themselves—one of which is to be affixed to the ticket, and the other to be kept in some sort of register provided for the purpose. By this means it is anticipated that much time will be saved, as signatures will not have to be asked for as they have been hitherto.

NEW ROBE FOR THE LORD MAYOR.—The Court of Aldermen have recently ordered for the Lord Mayor a new entertaining-robe, embroidered with gold, to cost 130*l*. Six years ago, in a penny-wise-and-pound-foolish mood, the Court provided a robe at the cost of 80 guineas, and the latter is now unfit to be worn. The Court of Aldermen have also recommended the expenditure of 833*l*. in the repair of the plate and jewels at the Mansion House. State without the machinery of state is a very absurd pretension.

A NEW ZEALAND PLAGUE.—In New Zealand, as fast as cereals and root crops are planted, the worms and insects that blight and destroy them are found alive and at work, although such worms and insects were never seen in the colony before. The eggs and grubs of these destructive creatures are introduced into the colony with the seed. The New Zealand colonists are now paying 20*s*. a head for every British insectivorous bird that is landed alive in the colony.

RECRUITS IN THE FRENCH ARMY.—Some statistics of 1864 strikingly bear out the assertion that the number of men which the French Emperor proposes to take annually for the army amounts to almost the entire product of able-bodied youth which France can produce. It will astonish many to learn what a large proportion of the young men who are forced to draw lots every year and liable to serve as recruits in the order of their numbers are rejected by the medical inspectors. In 1864 the number of men liable to serve was 325,000. Of these were rejected:

—18,196 below the standard height; 80,524 weak constitution, consumption, &c.; 15,988 mutilated from birth, hernia, &c.; 9,100 humpbacked and flat-footed; 6,988 blind or deaf; 963 stammerers; 4,108 insufficient teeth; 5,114 syphilis and cognate diseases; 5,213 gotto and scrofula; 2,158 crétins, lunatics, and paralytics; 8,236 divers incapacities. The total youth of the year unfit to serve in the army was 199,000 odd.

JOSEPHINE CONROY.

"How did it happen? How did you come to do it?" These questions are for ever sounding in my ears. Will they never cease their importunity? Listen and I will tell you all about it; then perhaps when my confession is at last made, when the whole truth is laid bare, I shall be no more tormented in this way.

Eugene Allyn was my first cousin—and I being without brother or sister, and an orphan—the nearest relative I had. Such, also, was the case with Eugene. My aunt, a stately dame, and one whom everybody admired, not only for her beauty but for her affability of manner—for her kindly though dignified condescension charmed even the most casual acquaintance—had been a widow since Eugene's childhood; and about a year prior to the events which I am about to relate her death had left him sole heir to the immense fortune acquired by his father through years of industry.

I wonder that I can talk thus calmly about one whose death was caused by the very hand with which I write. There, I have got so far in my confession, and that is considerable. But the worst is yet to come. It is easy enough for me to say I killed him. I say it to myself every day of my life, and then the awful questions, "How did it happen? How did you come to do it?" How did I come to kill Eugene Allyn?—that is what they mean. We who had been so warmly attached when boys, had been playmates together, always espousing the same cause, siding with one another in all disputes, without stopping to discuss the merits of this or that party.

Frail and delicate he looked as any woman, but there was no such trait as effeminacy in Eugene Allyn's character. His features were regular to a fault, his blue eyes full of love and gentleness, and his chin, at the age of manhood, without a show of beard. And yet, when aroused, Eugene was fierce and determined. I had once or twice witnessed what a decided will he was possessed of, what strong passions.

And I, what greater contrast could have been offered between any two beings? He so slender, so frail; I so herculean in my proportions—heavy of limb, broad of chest, and muscular. I who had run away from home at the age of eighteen, served two years as a sailor, been twice wrecked, and returned, prodigal son, to the house of my father, after every one had given me up for dead.

I shall never forget the meeting between Eugene and myself at that time, with that warmth, with that affection he greeted me, what tears he shed—tears of joy and gladness at my safe return. How he hurried away to find other clothes for me, clothes belonging to himself, for mine were all in rags, pretty much, after my rescue from that last peril, and how surprised he was when he discovered I had so far outgrown him, for we were nearly of an age.

Ah, if I could but go back to that time, and live over again my life, avoiding that one thing, that one dark—but what use is it to dwell upon impossibilities? A deed once committed cannot be wiped out. It stands recorded for ever.

It was five years afterwards. Again I had been away from home, but this time Eugene was with me at college. We graduated at the same time, and returned, having spent our vacations, all save one, in town. Four years work many changes, and time had not been idle with our friends at home. Those whom we had left boys had developed into men, and girls had become women.

There was one—it is long since I have written her name, long since I have spoken of it, and never for years, except to myself, and in the solitude of my own chamber—one, who, from a romping child of fourteen, had grown into a woman of eighteen, tall, finely proportioned, and handsome; yes, handsome, far more so than the word conveys an idea of usually. Those great black eyes, so full of light and mischief, and yet at times so tender. The dark, shining hair that had clustered in curls about the head of the child, now worn in smooth, glossy braids round the head of the woman. The shoulders white as ala-

baster; the perfect arm and hand, the rich red lips, with their smile that wrought such enchantment.

Josephine Conroy, that was her name; there, I have written it. How strange it looks before my eyes! Was she to blame? If not, why did she smile on me at first? why did she make use of soft words, that sounded so full of promise and encouragement to me? I, so eager to believe in her.

Have you guessed the truth, that I was in love with her? Why tell it? what need is there for me to confess it? It must be told, however; I was in love with Josephine.

Hardly had my eyes fallen on her as she was at that time, a woman in growth and feeling, than I loved her, loved her madly, passionately, with a love that was not to be quenched unless she herself, by some untoward act, put an end to the flame. You smile, perhaps; well, smile on, I have nothing to do with that.

I had not learned then to conceal my emotions, and Josephine saw in a moment the impression she had made. Women are quick to perceive these things. But I was not the only one who had become enamoured of her. Eugene was enslaved as well.

It was shortly after our return from college that my aunt died, and Eugene inherited his fortune. Was this the cause of Josephine's bestowing her favour upon him? It was I who first came forward, but as soon as my wealthy young cousin gave evidences of devotion then her smiles were all for him.

What a dreadful power it is that woman possesses over man, to drive him to deeds of wickedness and desperation. Is it the same with man over woman?

But let me hasten to the end. Let me finish this confession, and my mind will be easier, I am sure.

Eugene Allyn was the accepted lover of Josephine Conroy. She would be mistress of the great house, would she? and the wife of the owner of the broad acres which adjoined the narrower domain which would in time be mine! "Well, so be it," I said. The love that I had felt for Eugene turned to bitter hatred, to settled, fierce dislike. I avoided him whenever I could. When we met I observed a sullen, almost unbroken silence. It was impossible that this should remain unnoticed. The coolness that had sprung up between us soon began to be remarked, and the cause of it understood. Often I saw them together, walking, or seated in the porch of Josephine's home. Often I watched them, unseen by them, and every time my blood boiled, my hate grew fiercer. I felt an added strength in my arms. I could have killed them both.

It was late one evening, the moon was shining in the sky, her light obscured now and then by clouds that floated over the blue. A spirit of unrest had taken possession of me. I was wandering along a path that led from town towards Josephine Conroy's house. My own and that of Eugene lay on the other side of the village. Eugene often went to and from this way for a short cut. I had often followed the path myself.

Ah, but my heart was full of bitter thoughts that night. I was thinking of my old life at sea, of the cruel shipwrecks I had suffered, of my hopeless love for this girl; and with this last thought I drove my heel into the ground, muttered an oath, and looking up, beheld Eugene coming towards me by the path. He was humming a tune, he felt happy, no doubt; her kiss was warm upon his lips; his hand thrilled yet, perhaps, with her touch. He walked rapidly. Soon he came up with me; the path was a narrow one, neither of us turned aside, both came to a halt and looked into each other's faces. Mine was full of hatred, wrath, vindictiveness; his gentle, forgiving.

He extended his hand to me. I drew back with clenched fist.

"Eugene Allyn," I said, "you are my bitter enemy; you have stolen that from me which I had hoped to make my own."

"Arthur," he replied, speaking very gently; "Josephine Conroy never would have loved you; you mistook common civility and kindness for something warmer."

"It is false," I said, and struck him.

He reeled with the force of my blow; next moment, he sprang upon me like a tiger. A desperate struggle ensued. Eugene was possessed of wonderful strength for one of his build, and great agility. We laid hold of one another with all the ferocity of wild beasts, we tugged and pulled at one another, we attempted to trip one another; Eugene's hand was on my throat, I tried to remove it, I tried to seize him in a like manner.

The moon shone full upon us. The night was perfectly still, our hard breathing as the struggle grew more fierce, and the pressure of our feet upon

the sod, were the only sounds audible. First my way, then his, the tide of battle seemed to press. Now we were both on the ground, now up again, tugging away at one another. Never one down at a time.

A huge gulf yawned on one side of the path, not fifteen feet distant from it. Towards this we were tending. The dry branches scattered about upon the turf, as we struggled by degrees across the intervening space, cracked beneath our feet. Nearer and nearer we came to the edge, till at last we were close to it.

What demon was it that possessed me? Had I dragged Eugene thither for this purpose? His strength was failing him, his grasp upon my throat was growing weaker. I seized his wrist and tore his hand away, I loosened his hold upon me with the other. I drew back, I summoned all my strength—heaven! let me not say it—I heard the branches sway, I heard them crash beneath his weight, I heard his helpless voice come up from the dark ravine, and horror of what I had done gave wings to my feet, and, like the wind, I sped, not homewards, but away, away, never to return to that accursed spot again!

Once more I braved the seas, but before I went I gathered from a local newspaper full particulars of the mischief I had wrought, of the crime I had committed. Eugene Allyn's lifeless body was discovered at the foot of the ravine, mangled, hardly recognizable, except for his clothes, and a ring he wore, the gift of Josephine Conroy.

As for myself, I live under an assumed name, and do not ask to know more than I already know, that I am alone in the world, and that the house in which I was born is now the home of the stranger.

N. G. J.

THE *Henrietta*'s yacht is not quite so certain to retain her wreath of laurels as has been predicted on the other side of the Atlantic. Prince Alfred, who has challenged the spirited owner, is having a new yacht built expressly for the contest, and she will, of course, have all the newest notions which the able shipwright can embody.

THE MULES OF THE QUEEN OF SPAIN.—Queen Isabella II. of Spain visits the Prado almost daily. She is generally drawn by six or eight magnificent horses, but the Infantes and Infantas, and their suites by mules. When the Queen goes to the theatre or drives out after sunset she always employs mules, but they are splendid beasts, as large and almost as powerful as horses, with soft velvety coats, on which patterns are cut, and the royal arms are stamped on their hanches.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.—The figures of the great Orissa disaster are at last becoming clear. The Government of Bengal, in a dispatch intended to explain its conduct and defend its inaction, admits that one-fifth of the population has perished, or about 681,000 persons, and Mr. Ravenshaw, the Commissioner of the province, estimates the deaths at more than a million. This is exclusive of the losses in the Hill districts, in Ganjam, and in some districts of Bengal; but we will accept the official admission, and it is equivalent to this—the entire population of Wales has perished slowly of hunger, under a British Government levying a revenue of 45,000*l.* a year.

THE ORDER OF MERIT OF PRUSSIA.—The Prince Royal of Prussia is said to have taken steps recently to be convinced whether it were possible to discover a decoration of the Order of Merit of the same period as its founder, Frederick II. There was not one in the royal collection or in the museums. However, one has been found with an effigy of that monarch. On examining it closely it seems that the cross was not made of gold, but of tin. It was one of those crosses often distributed by the king. It appears that those who wished to have it in gold or enamel had to pay the extra expense themselves. Frederick the Second of Prussia was an economical monarch.

THE FRESCOS IN THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.—It is understood that shortly after the meeting of Parliament the state of the frescoes in the various parts of the Houses of Parliament will again be a subject of inquiry. The state of the frescoes in the Upper Waiting-Hall, which are wasting away through the damp, it is thought may be accounted for from the fact that they were painted in the wall, whereas the frescoes in the corridor leading to the Peers' Lobby were painted in the studies of the several artists, and all have a leaden foundation, which it was thought would be a preventive against damp; but they are now gradually beginning to fade. In the fresco by O. W. Cope, R. A., "The Burial of Charles I.," the colour is peeling away. The frescoes in the Houses generally have lately been the sub-

ject of minute and careful observation by connoisseurs, and the opinion seems to be that the colours are not placed on a surface which sufficiently resists the influence of the atmosphere.

HAMPSTEAD HEATH.—The chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works has recently had an interview with Sir T. Maryon Wilson in order to ascertain whether an arrangement could be made to purchase the latter's rights as lord of the manor, so as to secure the heath for the benefit of the public. Sir T. M. Wilson, however, claimed to be the proprietor of the freehold, which he estimated as worth from 5,000*l.* to 10,000*l.* per acre. The negotiations therefore came to nothing; and the Board of Works have resolved to await the decision of a case now pending in the Rolls Court to restrain certain building operations commenced under leases which Sir T. M. Wilson has granted.

THE WATER-WOLF.

CHAPTER I.

THE Bermuda Islands, lying in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean, nearly six hundred miles south-south-east of Cape Hatteras, are sufficiently within the low latitudes to enjoy a delightful climate, and consequently form one of those enchanting island-worlds which at one time or another have occupied the waking dreams of every adventurous spirit.

These islands, in fact, recall to the voyager the charms of Robinson Crusoe, at the same time that they present the charms of civilization. They are more than three hundred in number, and of various shapes and sizes, the largest being fifteen miles in length by an average of one mile in breadth, and the smallest a mere perch for sea-gulls.

They are all of coralline formation, and the smaller islets are in comparatively recent stages of progress, so that they are barren and uninhabited, but the larger ones are covered with eternal verdure, and grouped in such a way as to afford numerous bays and harbours, where the green shores alternate delightfully with the dark blue waters, and where all that meets the eye is as lovely as a dream of Eden.

The Bermudas are possessions of Great Britain, a naval and military station, and one of our convict settlements, on which account they are strongly fortified and defended.

The local government is vested in a governor, a council, and a legislative body, the former appointed by the crown, and the latter chosen by the resident electors.

The inhabitants comprise all classes and conditions of colonial society, including wreckers, fishermen, farmers, merchants, civil and military officials, and gentlemen of rank and fortune.

In short, there is hardly a group of islands in the world more worthy of attention on the score of beauty, romance and adventure than the Bermudas. Their history, too, for they have long been the resort of buccaners, is as wild as romantic.

It is to the Bermudas, therefore, and to a series of exciting events which occurred there some twenty years ago, that we now invite the attention of the reader.

On a low beach outlying St. David's Head, one of the easternmost capes of the Bermudas, there could have been seen one summer afternoon, at the period already mentioned, the crouching and motionless figure of a man.

He was under middle age, with a bushy beard and coarse features, and with a countenance deeply bronzed by the sun. His form was below the ordinary height and was even rendered slight by its sparseness, but it was extremely well knit and displayed a vigour and agility which can be acquired only by a hardy calling. His garb was that of a wrecker or fisherman, but the dark lines of his sinister face, no less than the fierce lawlessness of his manner, would have suggested grave doubts of his being an honest follower of either of those occupations. In a belt at his waist were visible a knife and a double-barrelled pistol, which served as a sufficient commentary on his repulsive appearance, and their effect was scarcely lessened by a sea-glass of powerful capacities which lay on the sand beside him.

For some time this strange man had remained motionless, with a scheming expression on his face, but he at length seized the glass, started to his feet, and looked through the instrument long and earnestly seaward.

There had been a terrible gale for several days, and the sea was fearfully rough, although the sky had become clear. This roughness of the waves impeded

the search of the solitary observer, but he finally assured himself that no sail was in sight.

"No signs of the Seabird yet," he muttered, in a tone of disappointment and feverish impatience. "I hope there is no mistake about her coming!"

Resuming his crouching posture, he drew from his pocket a *Bermudian Gazette*, and looking at a paragraph in one of its columns—

"This reads clear enough," he mused, with the manner of one plotting a piece of deep villainy. "The Seabird was to sail from Liverpool the 25th of last month. It is now twenty-five days later, and full time for her arrival, notwithstanding the tempest. The editor further declares, as an item of news, that 'Mr. Justice Cranstoun,' there's only one of that name, 'accompanied by his lovely and accomplished daughter,' the darling! 'has taken passage in the Seabird for the Bermudas'—how charming!—with a view to the recovery of his health, which has long been in such a precarious state as to alarm his family and friends. 'Him! here it is, in black and white, and no mistake about it! They're really coming, and I'll continue to watch for their arrival!'"

He returned the *Gazette* to his pocket, and arose to his feet, pacing excitedly along the sands.

"Yes, my dear Mr. Justice Cranstoun," he ejaculated, with a bitter sneer, "you're certainly coming, to the 'Mudas,' with your 'lovely and accomplished daughter,' and one of your dear old friends is waiting here to see you! In these islands there are many circumstances likely to favour the renewal of our acquaintance, and this time I shall not be the one to lose by it!"

The manner of the strange man, the tone with which he pronounced the name of the judge, and the savage sneer with which he referred to his daughter, were all startling exhibitions of hatred and wickedness, and betrayed a long-settled purpose of revenge.

As the solitary watcher again looked seaward his gaze was arrested by an object suddenly brought into view on a crest of the waves.

It was a raft composed of promiscuous pieces of timber, including spars and fragments of bulwarks, the whole scantily lashed together.

Upon this frail structure, firmly bound to its timbers, was the reclining figure of a young girl apparently unconscious, with the wild waves breaking over her from moment to moment. Her dark hair floated behind her like a drift of sea-weed, throwing into relief her delicate features, so pale and rigid that they seemed sculptured from the whitest marble.

Her eyes were wide open, looking heavenward with a prayerful expression, just as they had been doing evidently at the instant when she became unconscious; and her entire face, sprinkled with the foam of the sea, still retained the stony look of terror and despair which her last conscious emotions had imprinted upon it. Strangely beautiful in her peril, utterly helpless in her innocence, and borne onwards like a waif by the billows, she presented a spectacle at once so lovely and so terrible that the strange watcher admired while he shuddered.

He saw at a glance that the wind, the current, and the swell of the sea, all combined, were every instant bringing the raft nearer and nearer to the island.

He saw at a glance, too, what a fearful tragedy had brought the hapless girl into that awful peril—what struggles she had made—how she had tied herself to the raft, to prevent herself from being washed away—and how finally the cold and exposure, the drenching billows, and the various horrors of her situation, had all exhausted her strength and left her insensible.

"She comes from some doomed ship!" exclaimed the solitary watchman. "Perhaps from the Seabird!"

Trembling with a wild and fierce emotion, he hastened to launch a boat in which he had evidently come to the island. Loud roared the sea, and fiercely beat the waves against his frail craft, but, toiling with all his might, he was soon clear of the sands, and rowing off boldly towards the maiden. Now borne high into the air on the crest of a wave, and now sinking out of sight in a hollow of the billows, he held doggedly to his course, struggling through showers of spray, and at length ran alongside of the raft.

The next instant, as he looked towards the maiden, he started as if shot, and became deathly pale.

He had seen, on one of the pieces of spars comprising the raft, the name of the vessel to which it had belonged.

That name was the Seabird!

With a bound, like that of a tiger, he leaped upon the raft, cut the bonds of that unconscious maiden,

bore her to his boat, and hastened back to the beach from which he had started. Leaping ashore, he drew his boat on to the beach, and then, raising the head of the insensible girl gently in his hands, he gazed admiringly upon her.

"She lives!" he exclaimed as a moan came from her lips. "Who can she be?"

Even as he asked himself the question his eye rested on a name marked in a handkerchief tied around the girl's neck, and a hoarse cry of joy escaped him.

That name was Amy Cranstoun!

The first emotions of the strange man at the discovery were overpowering. He gasped for breath, and his features became livid.

"Cranstoun's daughter!" he finally articulated. "What astonishing good fortune! The Seabird is lost, and the girl has come straight to my hands, just as if she knew what a store I set by her! Ha, ha! isn't she a treasure!"

He laughed like a fiend incarnate.

Producing a flask of brandy from an inner pocket of his jacket, he poured a liberal quantity down the helpless girl's throat, and then set himself to chafing her hands. Her moans soon became more frequent under this treatment, and he saw that she was in a fair way to recover her senses.

"The locality is lonely enough," he mused, looking around, "but I must be quite sure that no one has witnessed her arrival."

He laid her down in the bottom of the boat, and ascended one of the bluffs near at hand, from which he could overlook the water.

As he again looked seaward he started violently.

At no great distance from the shore he perceived a large boat with several men in it approaching from the direction the raft had so lately followed. In the stern of this boat was seated a tall and distinguished-looking gentleman with gray hair and beard, whose attitude was one of the deepest despair, and whose eyes were fixed vacantly upon the waves, while he murmured:

"Lost! lost! my poor child—my darling!"

"They come from the Seabird, no doubt!" muttered the watcher. "Perhaps that tall man is the judge himself. In any case they must not see the girl. From this hour she must be as one dead. No eyes but mine shall ever behold her—never!"

With a few quick bounds he descended to the beach, pushed off his boat, sprang into it, and rowed swiftly away to the southward. The new comers were already within hailing distance, but their backs were turned to the shore, they being engaged in rowing, with the exception of the tall gentleman in the stern of the boat, who continued to regard the waves vacantly, and who seemed plunged too deeply in grief to pay any attention to what was passing around him.

It thus occurred that the strange man rowed away without being seen, and this result was all the more readily secured by reason of the fact that the rescued girl, or rather the captive, continued to remain motionless in the bottom of his boat. Keeping close to the shore, he soon rounded a little point of land, which cut him off from the possibility of being seen by the new comers, and he then gave utterance to an exclamation of security and satisfaction.

He knew that his movements had not been noticed by the strangers, and Miss Cranstoun was completely in his power. The consciousness of these facts brought a grim smile to his features.

"A glorious prize!" he muttered as he feasted his eyes upon the rare loveliness of the maiden. "For once the sea has been generous! This event more than repays me for all past losses and disappointments. The girl's worthy of a king."

He continued to row briskly several minutes, and then headed the boat to the beach, raised the inert form of the captive in his arms, and proceeded at a brisk pace to an opening in the base of one of the bluffs by which the eastern shore of St. David's Island is distinguished.

This opening, as he advanced, soon expanded into a large cavern, which was evidently employed as a transient shelter, if not as a permanent habitation, for the embers of a fire were still burning in the centre of the rocky floor, and farther on, against the inner wall, were placed a rude couch, a low chair or two, and a small cedar table, with a few provisions upon it.

Here, for the first time as he deposited the young girl on the couch, he saw that her eyes revealed a conscious intelligence. Her transportation, the brandy she had taken, and the rubbing she had received, had all contributed to recall her to herself.

"Where am I?" she demanded, in a voice of rare sweetness, as she raised herself up on one elbow and looked wildly around.

"Safe, lady, and in good care," answered the strange man, in the gentlest tones he could assume.

"No longer on the raft!" she murmured, with a long sigh of relief.

"No, lady, but safe on one of the 'Mudas'; not exactly in a house, but in the next best thing—the cavern of St. David's, where no harm can come to you."

"And you have saved me?"

"That is to say, I took you from your raft in time to prevent you from being dashed to pieces with it on the breakers."

"Brave man!" and she arose to a sitting posture, while she looked at him more earnestly. "You shall be well rewarded!"

"Lady, I have already been rewarded a thousand fold," protested the sinister plotter, with a low bow. "I have only done my duty. I was fishing off the rocks, when I saw your raft approaching the island, driven onwards by the wind and the currents. On the instant, leaving all, fish, lines, and hooks, I pushed off to the rescue, and was fortunate enough to bring you safe to land."

While thus speaking he placed a bush or two on the fire, which at once blazed up vividly, and disseminated a cheerful warmth and light throughout the cavern.

"Thanks, sir—a thousand thanks for your noble conduct," responded Miss Cranstoun as she extended her chilled hands to the fire. "I shall never forget it!"

She observed him closely, by the light of the fire, while thus expressing her thanks, but her eyes were full of gratitude, and without a particle of distrust or suspicion. By an effort of his will, her scheming preserver had softened his fierce air, and assumed a demeanour as quiet as it was humble, and one that was expressly designed to deceive the captive in regard to his character and intentions.

"Poor lady!" and he shook his head dolefully, pretending to be deeply affected by her misfortunes. "You have had a terrible experience."

"Oh! how terrible!" she echoed.

She shuddered as the thoughts of her late perils and griefs came back to her.

"Your ship foundered?" he continued.

"Yes, in the great gale of Thursday night. She was bound from Liverpool to these islands. It may be that you have heard of her; she was the Seabird."

"The Seabird!" he exclaimed, with pretended astonishment. "Is it possible? We knew of her coming, for the return voyages, you know, are always advertised in our local papers. Another thing, the *Gazette* learned from the Liverpool papers that Mr. Justice Cranstoun was coming out in the Seabird, and—"

"Oh, my poor father!" moaned the maiden, with a sudden burst of tears.

"What! was the judge your father?"

She bowed her head affirmatively.

"Is it possible?" and he affected a profound surprise. "How glad I am to have saved you."

The afflicted girl called all her hope and courage to her aid, and soon became calmer.

"Perhaps he's escaped in one of the boats," she murmured. "Do you not think it likely?"

"Oh, quite—quite. The ship had several good boats, of course, and at this very hour your father may be safe on one of the 'Mudas.'"

"Heaven grant it. I shall die if he is lost, for nothing in the world will be left to me. Oh, Arthur! Arthur!"

"Arthur," queried the strange plotter, but without making any remark, as if he had scarcely noticed her involuntary wail.

"I—I was thinking of a fellow passenger of the Seabird," explained the maiden. "Oh, he was so good and noble. The last I saw of him was when a terrible wave filled the boat in which he was pushed off from the sinking ship, and I fear that he is lost."

"And his name was Arthur, poor fellow."

"Sir Arthur Aldene. I saw him buried under the billow that swamped the boat, and—"

The grief that choked her utterance, and the tears streaming down her pale cheeks, attested how much she had learned to think of Sir Arthur, and how intimately she associated him with her father in her hopes and affections.

"Sir Arthur Aldene, eh?" said the pretended fisherman to himself, while the sorrowing girl struggled to recover her calmness. "I'll remember the name! It may be that the young cub will turn up in such a way as to cause me some trouble."

Turning to Miss Cranstoun, as soon as she had become calm enough to listen to him, he responded to her voluntary confidence as follows:

"Poor fellow, let us hope that he is safe. I will not question you farther, lady, at present, in regard to the loss of the *Seabird*, for it is high time to pay attention to yourself. As you see, I have a temporary habitation here, in common with several other fishermen, and can manage to supply you with food and dry garments. Here, for instance," and he advanced towards a stout wooden chest at one side of the cavern, "is a large quantity of clothing that was washed ashore from a wreck about two weeks ago. You will find here everything you need, all dry and nice, and let me intreat you to make yourself comfortable, while I take a turn up the beach, to see if any of the boats of the ship are in sight. You may feel quite safe while I am gone, for there are only a few of the fishermen who make use of the cavern, and not one of the number except me has come off to-day to the island."

As he finished speaking he raised the lid of the chest, and displayed several gowns, as evidence of the complete wardrobe that he had placed at her service.

"Oh, thanks—thanks," she murmured, with a shiver, as her thoughts reverted to the cold, damp garments clinging to her form. "I will avail myself of your kind offer."

"As to your supper," pursued the maiden's sinister preserver, "you may commence having it if you choose, as soon as you have warmed yourself and changed your garments. In these boxes," and he waved his hand towards a miscellaneous pile of objects in one corner of the cavern, "you will find bread, fish, pork, coffee, water, and such other things as our sort of people are in the habit of eating. I shall be back in time to help you with the supper, no doubt, and we will eat it together. Pardon me, lady," he added, as she shook her head sorrowfully. "I know what you mean—that you have no appetite, and all that—but let me say, that it is your duty to regain your strength as speedily as possible, and to make the best of your unhappy condition!"

The maiden assented, with a warm sentiment of gratitude to her rescuer, and then said:

"Of course you will soon come back, to give me your farther assistance in making my way to St. George's?"

"Most assuredly. Do not leave the cavern until I come for you. No one will trouble you here, and I shall not be gone long."

With these cheering assurances he made another low bow and took his departure from the cavern.

CHAPTER II.

On the beach, a short distance from the cave, the pretended fisherman halted. With the quickness of lightning his whole manner changed. His face became livid, and his form shook like an aspen. The efforts he had made while listening to the maiden to appear sympathetic, and the restraints he had been obliged to put upon his fierce jubilation, all rendered the expansion of his real sentiments terribly vehement. He raved—laughed—danced!

"I did not leave her too soon," he muttered, in a husky whisper. "I could not have concealed my real feelings much longer—my blood was on fire. To see her so beautiful, to know her so helpless, to think of her father—all this is maddening! And how charmingly she pins her faith to all I tell her! Capital! glorious!"

An instant only he indulged in these burning emotions, and then he turned his thoughts to the business before him.

His first step was to assure himself that no fisherman or other intruder had appeared in the neighbourhood, and his next was to walk away briskly towards the beach where he first beheld him.

As busy as he had become with his schemes concerning the rescued girl, he had not forgotten the boat he had seen approaching the shore, and he was anxious to know what had become of it.

A brisk walk of several minutes brought him to the little point of land which had so fortunately come between him and the new comers, and from this position he was able to look up the beach as far as St. David's Head.

"Ah, there they are!" was the exclamation that suddenly burst from him. "They have landed!"

At the very spot where he had been watching for the *Seabird* at the moment of his introduction to the reader was a party of seven or eight men, including the tall and distinguished-looking gentleman to whom

reference has been made. They had drawn their boat half out of the water, taken ashore provisions, built a fire on the beach from pieces of the wreck, and set themselves to looking for fresh water and cooking their supper.

A glance at the strangers had the effect of a cold bath upon the feelings of the sinister observer. He hastened to ensconce himself behind a sand-hill, from which he could observe them without being seen. A sudden apprehension shook him.

"Why did they stop here?" he asked himself. "Why didn't they go on to St. George's? Can it be that they saw the girl, or that the raft has been found by them?"

His alarmed gaze suddenly encountered a couple of seamen who were returning from a cabin in the vicinity with a keg of water, and this circumstance helped to throw a new light on the subject.

"Oh, I see," he added; "they were out of water—tired to death—obliged to rest, anyhow, and thought they'd make the best of it. Besides, they know that they can reach St. George's before dark. I see!"

These reflections gave him new courage.

The tall gentleman with gray hair and beard, who was evidently the leader of his companions, had seated himself on a stone in front of the fire, and was still looking over the sea, in an attitude of the deepest sorrow.

He was evidently past the prime of life, with a spare figure, and a pale thin face, which revealed a rare intelligence and refinement, and displayed that blended dignity and goodness by which the true gentleman is ever distinguished. His forehead was high and broad, and his clear gray eyes were singularly earnest and animated, as if the sensibility of his finely wrought nature was centered in them. Even in the grief which now pressed so terribly upon him, bowing his form as with the weight of years, there was a courtliness in his air and a stateliness in his manner which was at once striking and pleasing. His delicately cut features attested only too plainly that he had long been in bad health, and their extreme pallor rendered all the more noticeable the look of anguish and desolation which now rested upon them.

Like his companions, he was more or less wet from the spray, which had enrusted itself upon his clothes, and, like them, he devoted a portion of his attention to drying his damp garments.

The pretended fisherman bent a long and searching gaze upon him from the security of his sand-hill, and then he mused:

"Full ten years have passed since I saw Judge Cranstoun, and I cannot tell at this distance whether he is now before me or not. I shall have to advance nearer—in fact, I must have a talk with these strangers, and learn who they are. There's little doubt of their being the judge and his party; but this is no time for guesswork. I must know precisely who they are and what they are doing."

Having arrived at this conclusion, he arose and moved leisurely in the direction of the shipwrecked party. After taking a few steps he suddenly halted again, with a whispered ejaculation:

"What if he should know me?"

A moment he shrank within himself, but a moment's reflection restored his equanimity.

"No, no," said he. "Too many years have passed since he saw me. Besides, I'm greatly changed."

He resumed his course, emboldened to a degree that rendered him tranquil, and drew near the strangers. At his approach they all looked up from their several occupations, and the leader of the party started from his sad reverie, arose to his feet, and saluted him with a polite bow, inquiring:

"Do you come from St. George's?"

The visitor started at the sound of the stranger's voice. It convinced him that the speaker was Judge Cranstoun. He controlled his emotion, however, and answered:

"I left there a few hours since to fish off the rocks in this neighbourhood."

"Has anything been heard there of the loss of the *Seabird*?"

"The *Seabird*!" echoed the visitor, simulating a profound surprise. "Not a word, sir. Is she lost?"

"She went down on Thursday night, about fifty miles south-east of the islands. We are a portion of her passengers and crew."

"Is it possible? You surprise me. How did it happen?"

"The ship sprang a leak in the height of the late gale, and filled in two hours. After leaving the pumps we had barely time to get out the boats and

secure a few provisions. Some of the sailors made a raft, but it was swept away to the leeward just as they were about to embark upon it, by the same wave that swamped the boat in which I had embarked with my daughter."

"Your daughter?" echoed the visitor, now fully convinced that the speaker was Judge Cranstoun.

"My only child. In the shock and confusion she was torn from my side. The poor girl is lost."

"Lost! How terrible!"

"A number of us succeeded in reaching another boat, but nothing was seen of my daughter after we were all hurled into the water. The raft, which came crashing down upon us at that instant, must have struck her. The darkness was intense. Two boats finally got clear of the ship, and one of them, you see, has come safely to land. As to the other, we have seen nothing of it. Oh, my daughter! my daughter!"

The recurrence of this cry convinced the visitor that he had not mistaken the identity of the speaker, and he hastened to reply:

"What a fearful misfortune! What a blow, too, it will be to the people of St. George's! I heard one of the consignees telling an acquaintance this very morning that he did not feel at all anxious about the *Seabird*. He cannot yet be aware of her loss. You will see by our local paper, sir," and he produced his *Gazette*, "that her arrival was looked for with unusual interest, owing to the fact that a distinguished judge was reported to have taken passage in her."

"Judge Cranstoun, I suppose you mean?" said the stranger, gloomily. "I am Judge Cranstoun."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the visitor, taking off his hat and making a low bow. "As you see, Judge, I'm only a humble fisherman, but if I can be of any service to your honour I shall be most proud and happy to do it."

"Thanks, my good man. You will do us a great favour, as soon as we are rested a little, if you will help us row our boat into the harbour of St. George's. The men are utterly exhausted. They have been afloat thirty-six hours, sleepless, rowing and bailing incessantly, and eating uncooked provisions. I myself wish to go to Ex-governor Mayne's. I suppose you know where he lives?"

"As well as I know my own door," answered the visitor, with a flush of delight at the progress he was making. "I supply the governor's family with fish regularly. Permit me, Judge, to introduce myself to your honour. My name is Gunnel John Gunnel, at your service. I get my living by fishing, and am well known at St. George's. My wife and daughters live on Smith's Island, and are well known to the governor's family, for whom they frequently do plain sewing."

"You're a fisherman, eh?" demanded one of the seamen, bluntly. "Well, hang me! I've been to the *Mudas* twice, but I hain't never seen such a fisherman as you be, an' least of all such a *Mudan*. Why, you talk as glibly as a lawyer."

The visitor's face once more became livid.

"His use of good language, my man," said the judge, "is nothing against him. A man may be a fisherman, and yet be well read and intelligent. And so," he added, turning to the object of his remarks, "you will take me direct to the governor's?"

"Whenever your honour pleases," replied Gunnel, recovering his coolness, and turning his back to his interlocutor. "I will take your honour to St. George's in my own boat, and from thence it will be but a short walk to the governor's. He lives just close to the town. When shall we start?"

"As soon as the men have taken something and got rested—in about half an hour."

Gunnel reflected that it would be easy for him to dispose of Miss Cranstoun in less than that time, and he accordingly responded:

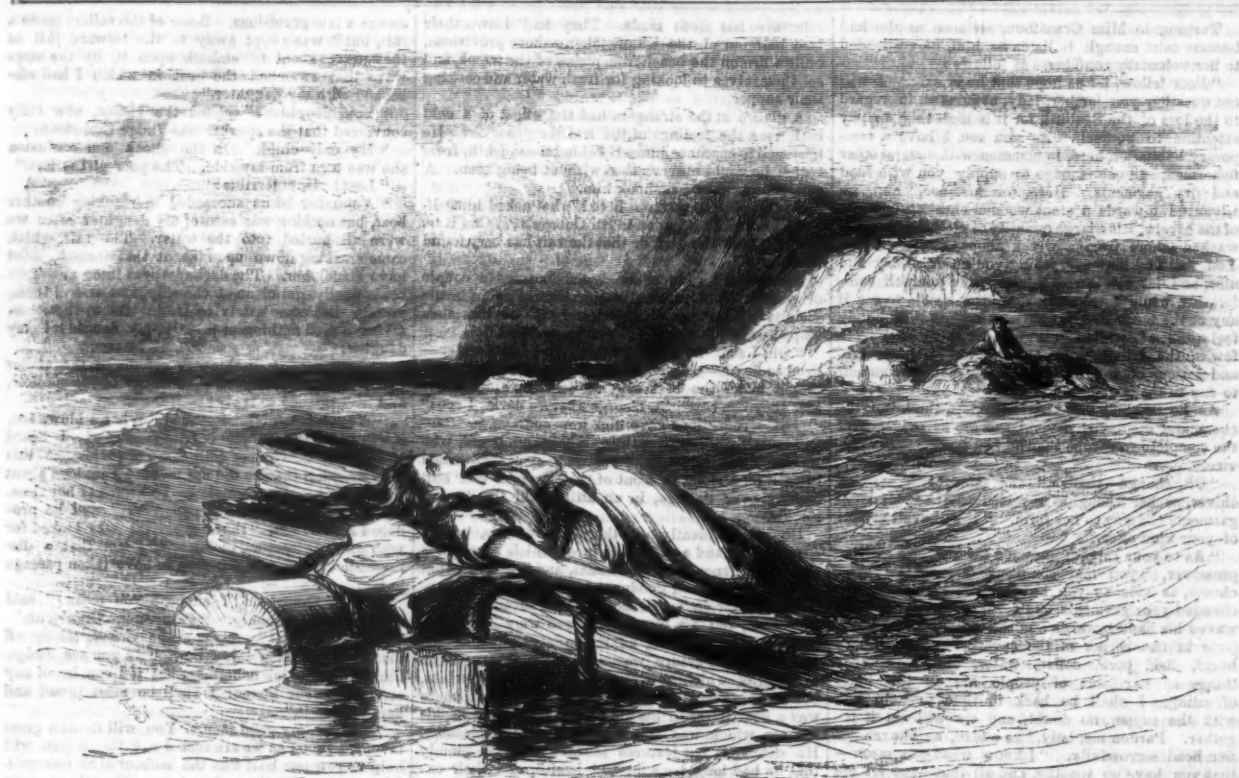
"Very well, Judge. I'll go and look after my fish, and be with you presently. I'll bring my boat with me. She's below the point, where I've been fishing."

"I am much obliged to you, my good friend," declared the judge, "and will depend upon you. You can take your time, however. The afternoon is pleasant, and the distance not great. Our perils are all over, you know. Alas, my poor daughter!"

"Your honour has no hope, then, of the young lady's rescue?"

"Oh, not the slightest," replied the stricken father, in broken tones, and with tears. "She must have perished instantly—alone in the waves, alone in the darkness! Yet God was there with her. His arms were about her. I will not repine. A few days of waiting, and I shall see her in heaven!"

He turned away sadly, resumed his seat by the fire,



[THE SHIPWRECKED GIRL AND THE SOLITARY WATCHER.]

and relapsed into the sad reverie from which the arrival of Gunnel had aroused him. The latter also turned away, with averted face, to hide the thrill of wicked triumph that shook him, and quietly took his departure. His joy was almost one of delirium.

"The situation of affairs is even better than I supposed," he mused as he walked towards the cavern. "The judge is quite sure that the girl is at the bottom of the sea, and will not even think of causing a search to be made for her. Could anything be more in keeping with my wishes? The girl in my hands, and the judge taking me into his service, my views are all in a fair way to be accomplished. At the first opportunity, however, I must look after that raft. The cords that bound the girl might suggest something, if any of these people should chance to—"

His musings were interrupted by a hoarse and indistinct cry from one of the seamen, who had been looking along the beach for firewood. He stood on a little cape ten or twelve rods north of the fire, and was pointing at an object immediately in front of him.

"The raft! the raft!" he shouted, as soon as his first burst of astonishment was over. "The raft of the Seabird!"

An answering shout burst from his companions, and the whole party, including the judge, ran towards the scene of discovery.

At this unexpected incident Gunnel became livid with disappointment and fear, and his limbs shook so violently beneath him that they were useless for some time. He finally calmed himself, however, and followed the seamen.

"It is our raft, sure enough," was the exclamation of Judge Cranstoun on nearing the object of the general regard. "You must have made it in the best manner. But what are those bits of white and drab cloth—"

The voice of the speaker suddenly died away in a startled murmur, and he reeled as if smitten by a severe blow.

"They are pieces of a shawl!" he gasped; "of a shawl worn by my daughter. I know them."

He flung himself forwards on the raft.

"The shawl I gave Amy on her last birthday," he cried, "and the one she had on at the moment she was hurled into the water."

He prostrated himself upon the bits of shawl clinging to the raft, and the sailors thought he had fainted. They saw, however, that his lips moved, and they soon heard words of gratitude and thanksgiving.

Gunnel turned to fly, but a thought restrained him. He knew that such a course would expose him to instant suspicion and pursuit. Pallid, shivering, as uneasy as a trapped wolf, he sank down upon a stone he chanced to encounter, with just life enough to be thankful that his companions were too busy to notice his terror and consternation.

"She lives! my daughter lives!" exclaimed the judge, with thrilling emphasis. "Behold the proofs of her preservation and safety!"

As in the most intricate labyrinth a single thread is sufficient to guide an explorer, just so were those few pieces of his daughter's shawl sufficient to announce the thrilling events in which they had figured.

With renewed murmurs of joy and thankfulness, the judge arose to his feet. The deductions he had made from the objects before him had given him a strength that seemed supernatural. His limbs were as steady as pillars of iron.

"I see it all, my brave boys," he said, with a cheerful faith beaming from his features. "This shawl which you see before us in pieces was fastened tightly around my daughter's shoulders, and could not be where it now is, in this condition, without hands. Who but my child could have torn the shawl in pieces? Why should she have torn it in pieces, except to tie herself to the raft? And why should these pieces have been cut, except to set her free at the end of her strange voyage?"

"You think, then—" began one of the listeners. "Nay," interrupted the judge, "I am sure that my daughter still lives, and that she is safe at this moment somewhere on these islands."

A buzz of joy arose from the sailors at this announcement, for they had learned, during the late voyage, to love both the judge and his daughter.

"Let's look for her," said one.

"Perhaps some fisherman has taken her to his cabin," said another.

Gunnel struggled to his feet, and approached the shipwrecked party. By a resolute effort of his will he had summoned courage and self-possession enough to venture to oppose the judge's conclusions.

"How does your honour explain the fact," he demanded, "that the raft has come ashore quicker than the boat?"

"In the simplest manner possible," replied the judge, with a clear and tranquil gaze that seemed to look through the dark soul before him. "The distance is fifty miles; the time thirty-six hours. Given

a terrible gale from the East followed by a strong wind from the same direction, and aided by the usual current of the ocean from the south, and what is the result? The result is that the raft was driven straight to the islands, while we, having no sun yesterday, nor compass, went a long distance out of our course."

The reply was so conclusive that even Gunnel could offer no response to it.

"And now, my brave boys," continued the judge, "attention, all of you. I will give a hundred pounds sterling to the man that first brings the news of my daughter. I am convinced she is somewhere on this island, in the hut of some fisherman."

"Or she may have procured assistance," interrupted Gunnel, "and gone on to St. George's."

"True, my good friend," said the judge; "but in that case we shall soon be there with her. We'll first make a thorough search of this neighbourhood—in short, of the whole island—and then away to St. George's. Away, my brave boys, each of you in his own direction, and do not leave the least hut unvisited."

The men separated on the instant, each running in a different direction, and only the judge and Gunnel remained on the beach.

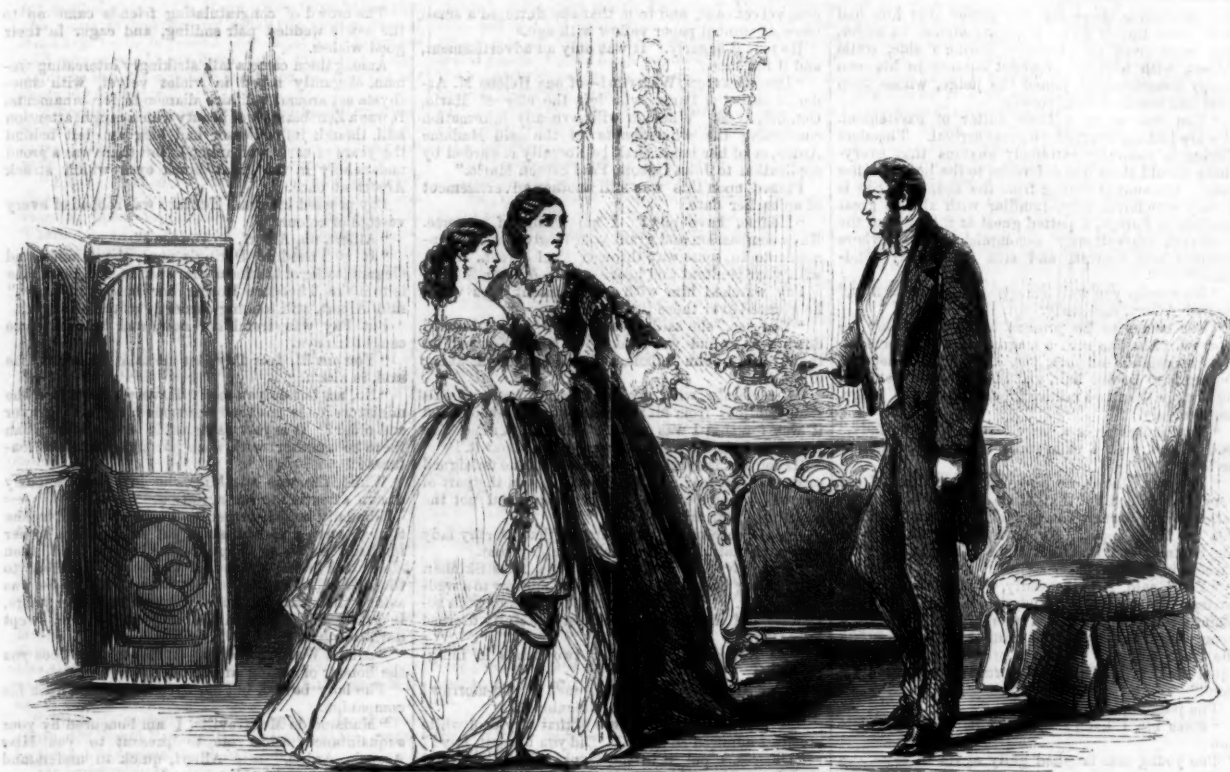
"And now, my good friend," said the judge, "let's take our part in the search. I'll go to the north, along the beach, while you go to the south, and we will keep moving until we meet on the other side of the island."

"With all my heart, your honour," replied Gunnel, with a pretended zeal, as he bounded away in the direction indicated. "I will do all in my power."

Suiting his action to his words, the judge had already hurried away in the direction he had assigned himself, and he did not so much as look behind him. The consequence was that Gunnel soon found himself alone, hurrying along the beach in the direction of the cavern. The instant he had turned the little promontory which shut him out from the view of the shipwrecked party, who had scattered inland, he broke out in a torrent of incoherent ejaculations, and fairly danced upon the beach, while he shook his clenched hand in the direction taken by Mr. Justice Cranstoun.

"Go ahead, my hearties!" he shouted, with a hoarse laugh of scorn and mockery. "There was a minute or two when things looked a little squally for me, but my sky is now clear! When any of you have earned that hundred pounds just let me know it!"

(To be continued.)



[HAPPINESS AT LAST.]

ASPASIA.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE trial had not taken place, but was waiting the approaching sessions. Albert took it in his route to pay a visit to the deacon's prison, and to reiterate his promise to help him all it was possible. A more crestfallen, unhappy, penitent wretch than Deacon Flint could not be found. His dread of a sentence of long imprisonment was pitiful.

"I think you may spare yourself any fears of such a sentence," repeated Albert, soothingly. "Except the goods found on the premises, there is no testimony against you but that of Aspasia Arden and myself. Convinced as we are of your repentance and future avoidance of such unlawful traffic, we have both agreed to speak guardedly in our evidence, and as much in your favour as can consistently be done."

"Heaven bless you!" faltered the deacon, "you've shown a more Christian spirit towards me than my wife."

"And now," said Albert, "I will go to speak a word to the poor wretch who so nearly caused my death. For him there is no hope; he will be convicted of a heavier offence than smuggling. His murder of those constables was wilful and deliberate. There is no chance for him."

He who had called himself Mat Whiting lifted his bowed head as Albert entered his cell and glared at him with his fierce, bloodshot eyes through the shaggy, unkempt locks straggling over his forehead.

For a moment his recognition was at fault, but as Albert advanced, with a shocked, compassionate face, he sprang to his feet, making the chains which fettered his limbs clank dismally. Those strange, unmet eyes were swiftly over the young man's face.

"Ha!" hissed he, "you have come to gloat your eyes upon my misery! Everlasting curses upon you!"

"Nay," said Albert, rebukingly, "I came to ask if there were anything I could do to relieve your personal wants, to urge you to put away this blasphemous spirit and prepare for whatever lies before you. I do not gloat; from the depths of my heart I commiserate and pity your forlorn condition."

There were tears in Albert's eyes while he spoke. His face showed how profoundly he was moved by the wretched spectacle before him. The miserable man stared at him still suspiciously, but with growing conviction of his sincerity.

"You want to help me? It is through your means that I am here," he said, slowly.

"No, not through my means, but through the laws which you have broken. Oh, think of the black catalogue of crime, and free your guilty soul. Ask pardon of man, seek forgiveness of heaven on your bended knees, and go in peace to your fate, whatever it may be. A suffering body is of poor account; but have compassion on your tormented soul, and free it from its heavy burden by penitence and prayer."

While he spoke Albert shuddered. The prisoner watched him curiously, and a dull gleam of hope came to the bloodshot eye. He came towards him as far as the length of the chain allowed and whispered, with a cautious glance towards the barred door:

"Young man, you say you're sorry for me, and well you may be for it's all through you that I am in this desperate fix. If you've the mind you can help me out of it, and I swear to you that I'll make it worth your while. I never meant to hint it. I was going to die and carry the secret with me—I hate that gal so for the tricks she served me. It was her not you who spoilt my game; I know that. But I'll forget it. You like the girl. I saw that from the first, and it made me hate you for all these years back. I've had my eye upon her. But I'll give it up. I'll let you marry her, and I'll tell you that which will give you the great fortune I meant to take myself. She's more than she seems, that Pay. The Flints were cunning; they put all the fine clothes and the trinkets out of sight when the poor thing's mother died. But I came across a few letters, and that, with something I heard when I was getting off my goods once, gave me the scent. I can tell you something that will give that girl a fortune, and show her her relations."

"Let me hear it then. I will listen attentively," he said.

A coarse laugh escaped Mat.

"Do you think I am a fool? I will tell you when I have got my pay, and not before."

"What do you require of me?"

He bent closer, stretching forth his dirty bony hand greedily.

"Only a very little—a good file and a little coil of strong wire. Nobody will know you gave it to me, nobody will believe that you, who got me in, would want to let me out."

Albert shook his head indignantly.

"Is it not time your plottings were over, wretched man? Do you think I will sell my integrity for your delusive story?"

"You don't believe it. I tell you it is true. The

gal has a right to a great fortune. They are waiting, they are longing for her, and she will never find them unless you do this. I swear to you that I will strangle with that secret unspoken. You will marry her, your fortune will be made, you will roll in riches; think of that, you poor, plodding school-master!"

"If I believed your story I would not comply with your wishes. I would not interfere with the righteous judgment of the law. But I have no faith in a word you have said. Give your time rather to repenting the sins of the past, instead of plotting new mischief," said Albert, sternly, and he left the cell.

"You'll think better of it," called out Mat, hoarsely. Despite his professed unbelief, the prisoner's story haunted Albert, and made him restless and uneasy, and at last it drove him back to the prison.

He sought the turnkey, told him what the prisoner had offered, and asked if the contents of his pockets, when taken, were in possession of the authorities, and if, in presence of proper witnesses, he might look them over.

The small parcel was presently under his inspection. A huge knife, a set of fine steel instruments for operating on locks, a well-worn pocket-book, with considerable money in it. That was all. Albert felt angry at his own credulity, and was pushing them away impatiently, when he observed a line of writing on the cover of the book. He read it with a deep conviction of its significance. It was the address of two persons. The first was written in an awkward hand, John Dubois, Paul Street, Marlo. Beneath, in quite different and improved chirography, was this single address, Mademoiselle Aspasia de Montreville, Rue Faubourg, St. Honoré, Paris.

Aspasia! Albert started at the name; who else could it be but Pay's mother, possibly that mother's mother? He copied the names carefully, thanked the turnkey, and turned his face again towards his old home. He had no near friends, for his parents were dead, but a married sister made him welcome to her home, and there he heard the wonderful stories of Miss Alicia Burton's good fortune, and the princely magnificence of the bridal preparations.

In due season Albert strolled towards the judge's mansion to make his friendly call. His sensations were curious when Alicia, in all the glory of an elegant costume, floated up to him, and for a single moment laid her gem-crested fingers on his hand.

But it was Alicia who stood agitated, self-convicted, doubtful, and it was Albert's heart which throbbed gladly and exultantly.

She lifted her eyes to his face, and read in the calm,

cool expression there that her power over him had fled. She turned away in pique, almost in anger, and went over to Theodore Doring's side, while Albert, with a smile of sweet content in his own happy consciousness, joined the judge, whose keen eyes had watched them closely.

"You find us in a little flutter of excitement. We are looking hourly for a great arrival. Theodore Doring is naturally extremely anxious that everything should show due deference to the honour of her visit. His aunt is coming from the country. She is a very wonderful lady, familiar with all the great families in Europe, a petted guest at the court of the Tuilleries, marvellously accomplished, everywhere admired and courted, and still remarkably handsome."

"No wonder you wait her appearance impatiently," replied Albert, carelessly.

"She comes to be present at the ceremony to-morrow. She has sent a magnificent bridal present. It is an established fact, you know, that Theodore Doring is to be her heir, and she holds in her own right more than two millions," continued the judge, impressively.

"Your daughter is a very fortunate young lady," said Albert, with a calm smile veiling the contempt he felt.

"Yes, yes, there's no question about that. I am very glad you take that little disappointment so rationally. Warner, I have spoken a good word for you to Mr. Capper. He is ready to take you as his partner, and that fact alone is surety for your success in the law."

"Yes," said Albert, coldly, "we arranged the partnership yesterday. I have no inclination to complain. I wrote you that I was also engaged to a young lady worth—" he paused longer to speak the truth and say, "worth a priceless fortune, quite equal to that of Theodore Doring's fortunate relation!"

The judge opened his eyes.

"Bless me, I hadn't heard of it. I congratulate you!"

The young man laughed gaily again in conscious pride.

"Oh, I didn't mean the stocks and real estate had come to hand; I spoke figuratively."

"Or like a lover—I understand," said the judge, with a little sneer. "But we shall see you here to-morrow to witness the ceremony, I hope."

"Thank you. I have no doubt I shall enjoy the festive scene exceedingly."

"I wish that fair lady whose charms weigh so heavily in imagination could be here also. If she arrives bring her with you."

"I should certainly do so if she were to make her appearance," replied Albert, little suspecting that he should accept the invitation.

He returned home, wrote a long letter to Pay, jubilant over his business prospects and his happy fate, in comparison with that of Theodore Doring, and was walking down to the post office the next morning to post it, when a stage driving down the street drew his attention by the frantic gesticulation of someone inside. He rubbed his eyes, looked again, and then rushed after it; and as the driver was stopped by some of the passengers within, he dashed to the door and flung it open.

"Miss Skinner, in heaven's name what has happened? Pay is ill—"

But here the words were checked, for behind Miss Skinner's spare, angular form emerged a symmetrical, graceful figure, and Aspasia Arden's bright, glowing countenance looked eagerly into his.

"Oh, Albert, something has happened. I could not wait a moment. You sent word that you were coming here, and I was so afraid I should not arrive in time."

He had both her hands in his. How supremely beautiful that soul-filled, eloquent face looked to him after his late glimpse of the silly, sentimental one which he had left in Judge Burton's drawing-room.

"Aspasia! I am so overwhelmed with delight at this unexpected visit. Come to my sister's with me and I will hear your story on the way. Miss Skinner shall ride with the trunks; but you must walk with me. And oh, Pay, I have an invitation for you to Alicia's wedding."

He drew her hand through his arm and led her down the street, never once losing a glance of admiring interest which the people they met bestowed upon the beautiful stranger.

"Deacon Flint sent me word that something which belonged to me was buried under the fir-tree in the garden. He said that Mat Whiting put it there five years ago. We sent our good George to dig, and, oh, Albert, he found a small tin box, and these were in it. I have a dim remembrance of the miniature; it belonged to my mother Mrs. Flint acknowledges; but that is not the most—look at this paper."

Her trembling hands took from her pocket a small

oval velvet case, and from that she fluttered a small piece of printed paper yellow with age.

He took it eagerly. It was only an advertisement, and it ran thus:

"INFORMATION WANTED!—of one Hélène M. Arden, a native of Paris, who left the city of Marlo, Oct. 5th, 1836. Whoever will give any information concerning the whereabouts of the said Madame Arden, or of her heirs, shall be liberally rewarded by application to John Dubois, Paul Street, Marlo."

Finised upon this was still another advertisement of an earlier date.

"Hélène, have pity! I am dying of remorse. Have compassion and grant your forgiveness. Communicate in some way through Paul Street, Marlo, with your penitent and heart-broken Aspasia."

Pay watched him with grave, intent eyes while he glanced over these little slips.

"You see," she said, breathlessly, "why I hurried down here to find you before you left. You will go there to this John Dubois, and find out the meaning of all this?"

"I certainly will, my Aspasia. I had got this same address from Mat Whiting's pocket-book, and it was for that I was going. I dared not raise false hopes or I should have written to you about it."

He led her into his sister's house with no unfeigned pride and joy, fearing no awkwardness on the part of one whose grace was the gift of nature and not the acquirement of art.

Upon Miss Skinner's appearance that worthy lady was immediately furnished with employment.

"You have not a moment to lose, Miss Skinner. This young lady accompanies me to-morrow to a wedding party. I shall hold you and my sister both responsible if she be not the most tastefully dressed lady there."

Miss Skinner held up her two hands in indignation.

"The likes of you foolish men! To-morrow! Was there ever anything so ridiculous?"

"It must be done. Where is that airy cool white muslin I admired so much? Did you bring it, Pay?"

"Oh, yes, I put it in the trunk myself," joyfully exclaimed Miss Skinner, coming up grandly to the emergency. "I'll run out to the shops and find some illusion lace and some pink ribbons, and I'll puff the lace of the skirt and sleeves, and I'll have little knots of ribbon floating out of the puffs. And she must have some flowers for her hair, and such a sash, and—"

"Ah, now I see I may safely retire," said Albert.

"It is all in trim. I shall not blush for my rustic maiden if she will not be ashamed of her school-master. And a pair of white gloves too, I suppose," he added, playfully caressing the shapely little hand lying in Pay's lap. "It has lost all the roughness of the cruel Flint régime, and has faded out of that browny tint into something very fair and daintily tinted. Well, I'll go and hunt over Brown's conservatory for something that will harmonize with illusion lace and pink ribbons."

CHAPTER XIV.

AND among the gay and brilliant crowd at Judge Burton's came Albert Warner, with a tall, slender, imitatively graceful maiden on his arm, and one and another touched their neighbour's arm and queried, "Who is she—that magnificent girl with young Warner?"

Albert heard, and smiled contentedly. Who could say this was the girl whom Deacon Flint had released from her last year of service? He himself must have been astonished at her perfect self-possession in this entirely new and trying scene but that long ago he had ceased to marvel at any perfection of hers.

Her cheeks were flushed a little deeper scarlet, her eyes sparkled with a more dazzling lustre from the excitement of the hour, but otherwise one would not have supposed she had ever moved in a different sphere.

She was the cynosure of all admiring glances, until the bridal party entered. Then, of course, came Alicia's triumph as she moved up the room with the snowy folds of satin trailing behind her, the bridal veil flinging its misty halo over the brow crowned with the orange wreath. Yes, the triumph she had desired was hers: on her white throat and around her fair arms scintillated the rainbow flashes of the diamonds—such diamonds as were the wondering admiration of the whole company.

For those few brief moments, while the solemn ceremony ensued, she was the admiration and envy of all her gay companions. Did it satisfy her?

Aspasia Arden looked up searchingly into Albert's face, and her heart thrilled joyously as she read there his own perfect content. Not a shade of regret or ill-will was there. He was right; it had not been true love, his boyish fancy for Alicia Burton, who was now Mrs. Theodore Doring.

The crowd of congratulating friends came up to the newly wedded pair smiling, and eager in their good wishes.

Among them came a tall, strikingly interesting woman, elegantly robed in violet velvet, with amethysts set around solitary diamonds for ornaments. It was a Zenobia style of beauty which caught attention still, though its possessor had long ago left behind the years of early womanhood. But there was a proud melancholy in the great black eyes which struck Albert at once.

Pay pressed his arm. Her face was robbed of every vestige of colour.

"Albert, oh, Albert, do you see?"

"It is Theodore Doring's aunt, the famous and elegant leader of fashion at Harwarden, I suppose. She is to make Theodore Doring her heir, you know," said Albert, still looking earnestly at the stranger.

But Pay was trembling now, and her pale face caught his eye.

"You are ill, dear Pay; let me take you away," he said, in alarm.

"No, no, but do you see? Have you forgotten the miniature? Is not that the same face, only graver and older? It is just as proud in the picture. Can there be another with such strongly marked features?"

While she was speaking she had unconsciously drawn attention to her agitation.

The lady herself turned to look at her, and as she turned gave a violent start, put her hand up to her forehead as if to disperse the vision, and then alone, and in haste, crossed the long apartment to the side of Judge Burton. It was evident she was asking their names. In a moment more the judge, in grand dignity, with the lady on his arm, swept down towards them.

"Albert Warner, Madame de Montreville does you the honour of asking an introduction."

The lady bowed, but her eyes were fixed upon his companion.

"Madame de Montreville, I am honoured by your acquaintance; allow me to present to you Miss Aspasia Arden," said Albert, quick to understand the thrilling revelation at hand.

"Aspasia Arden!" repeated Madame de Montreville, almost shrieking out the words. "Where is your mother?—living likeness of her that you are; take me quickly to your mother, for I am your aunt."

Pay had stretched forth her hands in solemn joy.

"My mother is dead, but oh, I am so thankful to find a living relative."

"Dead—Hélène dead!" repeated Madame de Montreville, in a hoarse voice. "Child, child, why did she refuse to come to me? Why have you avoided me so cruelly?"

"Let us go to the library, where we may be secure from observation," said Albert, gently. "It is a sad story; you will not care to hear it before these curious eyes."

"You are right," said she, recovering her dignified composure.

Albert offered an arm to each, and led them through the crowd, and as they passed a low murmur testified to the general consciousness of the striking resemblance between the two ladies.

The judge gasped for breath, and hurried out of sight. Theodore Doring, too, from beside his bride cast an anxious glance after them. Alicia was not quick enough to detect the coming blow, and still smiled in proud satisfaction with her diamonds and her imitable toilet.

In the library a sorrowful, affecting story was told with tears and sighs.

Madame de Montreville held Aspasia in her arms, weeping bitterly at its conclusion.

"My poor Hélène! It was I who drove her forth. My jealous rage, my imperious temper. So sorely, in dust and ashes, have I repented; believe that, my child. I loved your father, and I thought Hélène won him away from me. I know now that he never cared for me. It made a fury of me, and, stung with wounded love and humiliated pride, I vowed revenge. An accident tore him from life, and, instead of pitying the hapless sister who was widowed, I set myself to poison my father's feeble mind against her. Too well I succeeded. He left her his curse, and died. When I was left alone in possession of the whole fortune which should have been shared by my hapless sister my senses returned to me. I saw the hideousness, the sinfulness of my conduct. I fell on my knees before heaven, and vowed myself to retrieving the evil I had done. I refused every offer of marriage. I devoted all my energies towards finding my wronged Hélène. We tracked her to Harwarden, and there lost all trace of her. I took up my abode there, and thence prosecuted the search in all directions. But all in vain. I had despaired of learning anything, and had decided to adopt your cousin Theodore for my heir. Thank heaven, I have found you, dear, precious daughter of

my sainted sister. Oh, if my whole thought and care can atone to you for my cruelty to your mother, I shall hope to die in peace! She must have loved me still, or you would not have borne my name. Perhaps she can see my deep penitence, perhaps she accepts my expiation."

Albert left them in a tender and tearful embrace, and did not return for nearly an hour. Upon his re-appearance Madame de Montreville held out her hand with a welcoming smile, and said, earnestly:

"I have learned in your absence how much my niece owes to your kindness, and I give my warmest blessing upon the tender relation between you. There can be no reasonable cause for delay now. Aspasie's fortune, in her mother's right, will be more than enough for the realization of your fondest hopes. Mine also lies waiting her acceptance. You must be married at once and come to make my home in Harwarden what it has never been, the abode of pure domestic peace and joy."

What could Albert answer? He had no foolish pride in wedding the heiress, since he had loved and wooed her as a penniless and friendless orphan. He could not relinquish his claim upon his precious Pay. Was she not dearer to him than the fortune? and since the latter was her rightful accompaniment would it not be childish in him to demur at the generous gift she brought him?

He kissed Madame de Montreville's hand in warm respect, and gave one mute but eloquent glance in response to Pay's wistful looks.

"The company without are naturally curious and excited," said he. "I ventured upon no explanation. The judge I fancy is quite impatient, perhaps Theodore Doring likewise. Shall we go to them?"

"Theodore Doring—yes. I had forgotten him entirely. He will naturally be keenly disappointed, for this discovery will sweep away all his hopes. But he has always known it might come; I have never concealed the true state of the case from him," said Madame de Montreville, gravely.

"There is enough for all. Let him have your share still," said Pay, gently. "I should feel guilty to think I had come to rob him."

"It is not robbery. You only come into your right. He has already received more than you told me was the height of your ambition for this young schoolmaster's winning. I gave it to him freely, though he had no legal claim. You understand his mother was only a step-sister of ours, no blood-relation whatever, had no claim upon our father's property. He shall never know want, but the De Montreville estate must go to the true heiress, in whose face I rejoice to find so faithful a representative of the old De Montreville beauty. But as you say, Mr. Warner, we had better go to the company. Allow me again to express my gratitude that I can present my niece to them and only feel emotions of pride and joy at her refined and graceful appearance."

With Madame de Montreville and her lovely niece on his arm Albert entered the scene of festivity, and quietly made his way to the bridal group, where the judge was standing with a nervous, excited look on his face, which his forced smiles could not hide.

Madame de Montreville did not wait for him to speak, but, stepping towards the uneasy bridegroom, she said, gaily:

"Congratulate me, my dear Theodore. I have found my niece, Miss Aspasie Arden, the dear child for whom I have looked so long and vainly. Aspasie, my love, this is your cousin Theodore and his new-made wife."

Theodore Doring shook Aspasie by the hand, and in a sort of desperation murmured over some incoherent words about being astonished by her sudden appearance.

Alicia was quite thrown off her guard by the suddenness of the development, and exclaimed, lugubriously:

"Oh, Madame de Montreville, is this the lady who, you said, would alone have a right to take these diamonds you gave me to-day away from me?"

Madame could not forbear a smile.

"The very same, Mrs. Theodore Doring. The gems belonged to her grandmother, and her own mother has worn them many a time. It was fortunate I gave them with that proviso, for they will undoubtedly be very precious to her."

Aspasie made a movement forward, but Madame held up her hand with a reproving gesture.

"It is right these old family jewels should remain in the possession of the direct heirs. This new discovery will also affect the disposition of my father's property. I trust, however, Theodore, it will not in the least diminish our friendly relations, nor that the disappointment will be felt seriously, since you have always known it might come at any moment," said she, with quiet dignity.

Poor Theodore tried his best to hide the chagrin and angry disappointment he really felt. He glanced at the black frown on the judge's brow, and at the

childish sullenness which disfigured Alicia's pretty face, and felt his heart sink. But the gush of merriment coming with the approach of a second rush of bridal guests warned him to resume the demeanour of the happy bridegroom; he whispered a few words of encouragement to Alicia, and led her out into the ball-room among the congratulating friends who had signally failed in a right interpretation of this little episode.

The judge remained by Madame de Montreville to obtain a clear statement of the case.

"Do I understand that you withdraw from my daughter's husband all those expectations he has been led to rely on?" asked he, in a stern, injured tone.

Madame de Montreville arched her haughty neck. "Mr. Justice Burton," she replied, "Theodore had no right to any expectations at all, they were the free gift of my bounty if they came. Such too was the portion I have already given him. Aspasie Arden, on the contrary, has a legal right to her grandfather's fortune."

"But it lies in your power to make something as an atonement—for, after all, circumstances themselves have put him in a false position, and something is due to him on that account," began the judge, eagerly.

"I do not understand you, sir," said Madame, coldly.

"For instance, in my own case. I gave my consent to my daughter's marriage believing him the heir to a large fortune—and now—"

"And now, if you repent it is to your shame. If you received him as a son-in-law because of an expected inheritance—if your daughter married him to obtain that set of diamonds—I say that you are rightly punished, both of you, and poor Theodore will have my profound sympathy," said Madame de Montreville, a flash of indignation gleaming from her fine dark eyes; and sweeping him a haughty courtesy, she went over to Albert, and linked her arm affectionately in his.

"It is refreshing to find pure love, unselfish freedom from mercenary motives here," said she, in a fervent tone. "The schoolmaster and Aspasie—well will you deserve, my children, the rich reward in store for you."

The wedding party was ended at last. No one was more thankful when the last of the retiring guests took leave than those who had formed such proud and happy expectations of the evening, the angry, disappointed judge, the peevish, discontented, remorseful bride, who removed the coveted diamonds with the sorrowful thought:

"They belong to another now. She will have the diamonds, the great fortune, and Albert Warner besides!"

The original plan had been for the bridal party to start for Harwarden, and make a prolonged visit at the grand mansion of Madame de Montreville, who was to accompany them. She begged that the arrangement might still be carried out, only declaring it impossible for her to join them on the journey, but promising to come to Harwarden in another week.

There was a sacred duty before her. Aspasie's childish wish was carried out. Tenderly and solemnly the sacred dust of the hapless mother was removed from the desolate churchyard among the hills of Harwarden, and carried to the carefully tended cemetery in Harwarden where Madame de Montreville herself was to rest at last.

Aspasie took her last look at the old familiar scenes which, once so distasteful, had now only tender memories of Albert's kindness and affection. She led her shuddering aristocratic aunt over the forlorn rooms of Deacon Flint's house, smiled at her horror and dismay, and dropped a tear in the wretched little chamber where she had passed so many weary nights. She left something also behind her—a glittering row of gold pieces dropped into the horny hand of Mrs. Flint, with this gentle rebuke:

"Be more tender and generous to whatever desolate child comes in your way hereafter."

Slowly and lingeringly, like one in a dream, the girl passed down the mountain road. At the enclosed area occupied by the mills, and the tannery, she paused and pointed out to Madame de Montreville the yawning chasm of dashing water across which she had walked so fearlessly on that ever memorable night.

That lady gazed in awe and astonishment, and said, fervently:

"Heaven was watching over you, my child; only heaven's intervention could have saved you from all these perils and brought you forth from these woeful circumstances, the dear, true-hearted child you are. Let us go away, dear Aspasie. It fills me with sickening remorse to remember that I am in a measure responsible for all these trials of yours."

"Trials that are pleasant to look back upon," replied Aspasie, gently. "I thought once I should leave this place in bitter anger, shaking off the dust

of my feet against it, but I find there are many sweet and tender memories linked with it. But they all circle and cluster around one image."

"Ah, yes, I understand," replied her aunt. "And already have I learned to love and honour him. Harwarden is dear and precious to you because it gave you—its schoolmaster."

"Pay Arden has come back rich! only see how grand she feels," called out a rude boy as they passed along through the village streets, thus recalling to the girl another of her day dreams.

She smiled thoughtfully, and wished she had resisted her aunt's wish, and refused to wear the costly clothing heaped upon her, until they arrived at Harwarden. Far enough from her heart was the triumph over them—to excite their envy, to parade her good fortune in the sight of the villagers.

She gave the boy a gentle, reproachful glance, and bowed continually to the humblest among the gaping gazers.

She had one trying parting scene, and that was with Miss Skinner, who persistently refused to accompany her to her new home, or to receive a reward for her kindness. But the poor creature was nearly heart-broken.

"I never knew how I loved you, Pay, that's just the solemn truth. You've crept into my heart without my knowing it, you and Mr. Albert both; and you'll always have my prayers and my good wishes, and you both deserve all the good fortune that has come to you. But don't ask me to leave poor George and the old place. I can't settle comfortably into new ways, and I ain't fit for the grand places you'll fall into as naturally as you did into that first ball-dress we made up for you in such a hurry. Good-bye, Pay; I shall never see your like again, I know that, but we'll all meet some time in heaven."

And here the worthy spinster's voice failed, and her new black silk apron went over her face, and she ran off out of sight, and looked herself into her house.

Madame de Montreville drew her weeping niece to her arms. "This tender affection does honour to your good heart, Aspasie, my child; but this shall not be a final good-bye. We will manage to overcome her scruples, and bring her to many a pleasant visit when you are well established in a home of your own. It is time for the coach to take us away now, and Albert, you remember, is to meet us."

And at that magic name Pay smiled and was comforted.

Albert met them with startling intelligence. Mat Whiting was dead. In a desperate attempt to break out from the jail he had fallen from a great height and broken his neck, dying without a struggle.

It could not be otherwise than a great relief to be spared the trying experience and the notoriety of giving testimony at his trial.

And Deacon Flint was now released from his most dangerous accuser. He paid a heavy fine out of his hoarded gains, and came home to his farm a poorer, an humbler, but a far better man.

There was no hindrance now to the delightful plans of Madame de Montreville. The wedding was to take place at once, and the newly wedded pair and their tender relative were to set forth on a protracted tour through Europe, to linger most of all in the sunny French home where Aspasie and Hélène de Montreville had grown up loving and confiding sisters and tender friends, never dreaming of the cruel estrangement which should darken their womanhood.

So it happened in due season.

Madame de Montreville's magnificent wedding fête was the theme of admiring discourse for months afterwards, and the fortunate guests present were never weary of recounting upon the bride's loveliness and rare unconsciousness of manner, and the bridegroom's gallant bearing. Harwarden had seldom seen the like.

Mrs. Theodore Doring, a peevish, discontented, envious woman, was present at the bridal ceremony, and the glimpse she caught of Albert's tender glance brimming with holy joy as he turned to greet his bride haunted her and spoiled the enjoyment of the set of diamonds she had received as a present from the bride.

Two years afterwards Alicia Doring left the home she had made miserable for poor, weak Theodore, and went back to her father's house, answering his angry reprimand by a severe burst of passion and the bitter retort:

"At least you have no right to blame me. It is all your management. What else could you expect?" And the conscience-stricken judge answered not a word.

When this happened, in that luxurious and refined and happy Harwarden home Albert and his wife were sitting beneath Christmas lights and garlands. The conversation evolved from a letter of Miss Skinner's announcing the peaceful death of Deacon Flint.

"All things are so beautiful for us. This is such a golden Christmas," said Pay, smiling softly through her happy tears. "Ah, as I look back it seems as if every step of the way since those far-off dreary sorrows had been growing smoother and brighter until it bursts into all the dazzling glory here."

She pointed to the green tracery of the wreathed windows, and through an open archway where a generously laden tree was sparkling and scintillating as beneath myriad fairy lights.

"All is bright, so beautiful, my husband, I can scarcely realize that poor little Pay Arden has any right here."

"The hand of Providence was all the time guiding your destiny, my precious Aspasie," said Albert, with grave lips, but glad and sparkling eyes. "No single circumstance, however harsh and trying, but was needed to bring forth just such a character as adorns and blesses not only my peaceful, happy home, but the whole community around you."

"Why do we not always trust that loving, guiding Hand? Why do we not lean confidently on His holy promise, content to know that however dark the cloud, however bitter the storm, we shall come forth into this light and glory?"

THE END.

SCIENCE.

In the northern hemisphere the ascent of a high mountain causes a rush of blood to the head, and in the southern there is an attraction of blood to the feet.

STREAMING by means of a steam-engine ejecting steam through pipes is the latest novelty for cleaning the façades of public buildings in Paris. The process is quick, and might be applied in London.

The Transatlantic cable tells us the rate at which electricity travels. A message from Newfoundland to Paris takes half a second. At this rate, in twelve seconds a current could be passed round the earth at the equator, a distance of 22,370.5 miles—being a little more than 1,864 miles to the second.

The maximum depth of the Straits of Dover is understood to be about 150 feet. At this depth a leak in the proposed tunnel of only one square foot in area would require a steam-engine of 1,600-horse power to overcome it, while the pressure on every square foot of the bed, and of course if the bed were soft and capable of transmitting the pressure, on each square foot of the tunnel would exceed four tons.

In addition to the iron-clad frigate *Hercules*, 12,526 tons, 1,200-horse power, and the turret-ship *Monarch*, 6,510 tons, 1,100-horse power, building at Chatham, the Lords of the Admiralty have directed a double-screw steamer, to be named the *Beacon*, to be laid down at that establishment and built during the present year. The new vessel is to be constructed on the composite principle, the frames being of iron, and the planking and other parts of wood.

The absorbent qualities of charcoal seem to have been understood by the ancients. Buildings in damp places stood upon masses of charcoal. Diogenes Laerte and the architect Theodorus, who built the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, employed the material largely in the foundations of the building 2,500 years ago; and in later times the stakes driven into the river banks by the Britons, in their efforts to resist the Roman invaders, were charred at their extremities, and are so far perfect that the charred portions retain their woody appearance when workmen came upon them at the present day.

NEW NAVAL GUN.—Experiments have recently been made with a new naval gun of greater power than any yet tried in France. It is rifled, is four metres sixty centimetres long; the metre is 3 ft. 3.371 in.; weighs 22 tons, can be used both for shell and solid balls, the latter being in steel of 216 kilogrammes, 432 lbs. The details of the experiment are not given, but they will prove, it is believed, "that at a distance of 1,500 metres the solid shot can easily pierce plates of sixteen centimetres, and destroy in a short time the thickest walls of fortified places."

COPPER SMOKE.—For generations past efforts have been made to utilize the smoke emitted from the various copper works of the kingdom, which is known to be so injurious to all vegetation around. In the neighbourhood of Swansea, which is the principal seat of the copper trade, there are thousands of acres with hardly a blade of grass upon the ground, and in many instances the smelters have had to pay heavy damages for the injurious effects of the smoke on adjoining properties, even trees many miles distant being affected. About twelve months ago Mr. H. H. Vivian, M.P., adopted an invention at his works in order to see whether something could not be done to abate the nuisance, and, if possible, utilize the

smoke as well. A considerable outlay was incurred in giving a thorough practical test to the invention, and at the meeting of the West Glamorgan Agricultural Society Mr. Vivian announced that his efforts had been crowned with entire success. The smoke is condensed, and by judicious admixtures a very excellent superphosphate is produced which is especially suitable for root crops. Mr. Vivian calculates that in a short time he will be able to produce annually sufficient manure for 40,000 acres of land. The success attained will no doubt induce other copper-smelters to follow the example, and many thousand acres which are now almost a barren waste will then be made fertile ground.

STONE CUTTING AND POLISHING INVENTION.—Mr. E. W. Uren has obtained a patent for two machines for dressing granite and other stones. The tools, which are of the ordinary description of those used by stonemasons, are attached to a vertical ram, which acts after the same manner as a Nasmyth hammer, and can be propelled by steam, water, or other power. The tools are so arranged as to be able, it is said, to do all the work which is at present performed by manual labour, including all the varieties of clefting, scabbing, fine pick dressing, tooth-axe dressing, &c., and at less cost. For surface polishing another machine is had recourse to, having a rotary instead of a vertical motion. A number of stones can be dressed at the same time.

VARIATION IN THE RESPIRATION OF HUMAN BEINGS.—In reference to respiration Dr. Edward Smith found the amount of carbonic acid evolved by the human system varied from day to day with the cycle of the season. He found that there was a definite variation in the amount of vital action proceeding within the body at the different periods of the year, and that this followed a well-marked course. Thus, at the beginning of June a fall commenced, and this continued and progressively increased through June, July, and August, until the commencement of September, when the lowest point was attained. After this period an upper tendency was manifested, and it continued through October, November, December, until January, when a point was attained from which there was little change in January, February, and March. In April and May the amount of carbonic acid evolved was yet farther increased until the point was reached whence it started.

RED SNOW.—This somewhat curious production of nature has been known for a long period, and its peculiar colour was at one time considered to be occasioned by the presence of microscopic vegetable life, inasmuch as after its melting traces of reddish-coloured globules remained. This vegetable theory was received with great satisfaction, and the first announcement of its fallacy was derisively rejected. It is impossible, however, to always keep out the truth, and it was not long after the truth of the first theory had been called in question that Shuttleworth and the other observers satisfactorily demonstrated to the scientific world, through the aid of the microscope, that the red colour of the snow was the result of animal and not vegetable life. The existence of many different kinds of infusoria, such as the *Philodina rosea* and others, sufficiently explained the occurrence of the phenomenon. After violent south winds the snow is frequently covered with a fine dust of a cinnamon colour, which presents at a distance a reddish reflection. Analysis has proved this colouring matter to be in an organic nature, containing oxide of iron, carbon, silica, chalk, and aluminum, all substances entering into the constitution of volcanic cinders and meteorites.

It is the intention of Her Majesty to renew the gift of 250 volumes of books to the Itinerant Village Library of the Yorkshire Union of Mechanics' Institutions made in 1854 by the Prince Consort.

The Marquis of Westminster, being about to eject 149 poor families on his London estates, is providing houses for them by advancing the necessary capital to the association for building houses for the poor, for the erection of a suitable block of buildings.

The Duke of Beaufort proposes to have exemption tickets from Custom House search, price 1*l*. The idea is a good one, to prevent the honest from being annoyed; also a good one for the smuggler of fifty pounds' weight of tobacco, to exempt him from molestation. All parties being satisfied, who can cavil? Surely not the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

ACREAGE UNDER WHEAT.—The extent of land under wheat in Great Britain and Ireland was computed in 1866 at 3,697,635 acres, of which 3,385,394 acres were in Great Britain; in Sweden, at 115,000 acres; in Denmark, at 140,448 acres (in 1861); in Wurtemberg, at 544,284 acres (in 1865); in Bavaria,

at 1,043,584 acres (in 1863); in Holland, at 194,780 acres (in 1864); in Belgium, at 804,758 acres (in 1866); in France, at 17,252,386 acres; and in Austria (exclusive of Galicia, except Cracow, Bukovina, the Tyrol and the military frontier), at 3,662,164 acres. These figures show the immense importance of France as a corn-producing quarter of Europe, and how greatly the failure or success of French harvests must affect the price of wheat throughout the world.

EVENING ON THE WATER.

WATCH how finely the evening falls over the river! It seems as if the abnegation, rather than the loss of light took place, and, if we consider the slow and gentle changes of effect, we shall perceive how we are whirled into the vast shadow of the planet's bulk—the shadow that we call night. Steadily we are drawn from under the golden mantle of day; the last broad border of scarlet and vermilion hangs thin above us like a mighty fringe, burning with a beautiful awfulness; now the orange radiance that it cast so grandly into the ether is past, and we are borne by the eternal whirl into the silver monotone of evening, that deepens from pearly hues to dull and sombre gray.

Ten minutes since those trees that stand on the margin of the islet rendered themselves distinct by deep reflections on the water. At one moment the reflection was more easily discernible than the trees themselves because they mixed their own tone with the sky—now trees, sky, river, reflections, shadows, and all are gone, buried in one grayness of night. We shall see another change presently, when the moon rises over the river. Meanwhile, if you be refreshed, get into the boat again, sit steady, and you shall be safe; button yourself up, for even the summer night may chill a poor town ghost, who is more accustomed to gas than moonlight. You can hardly see the shore, you say; true, but wait, and if this veil of clouds have but a rift in it you shall see one of the loveliest and most awful sights in creation—scenes which God made to remind us of Him—the golden and the silver porches of night and day, through which, twice a day, we are whirled on the car of time. Sun-rising and moon-rising, how wonderful they are.

Now we are clear of the trees, you see, to make a bull, that it is not so dark as we thought; there's a long line of sordid fire over the level there that shall not vanish all night, and which even the moon will only render mysterious. Overhead is the motionless mantle of gray, palpable darkness, setting in; there is no sound but the susurrations of the taller trees, whose tops some laggard breeze shakes, as it goes hurrying after the sunlight—an airy torrent that has been shut up and heated in some far-off valley, or lain, at length, asleep and heat-oppressed, upon a lofty down against the sea, and, at evening aroused, now followeth the sun and its companions the daylight breezes. Motionless silence is the right of such a time as this. Speak low to me! The loftiest poplar has swung itself to rest; the tenderest aspen lipps, "Sleep, sleep, sleep!" In their silent dominion the great elms have been long ago dreaming, and the birch has drawn its boughs, like eyelids, around its silver bark. Let my ears go beating like a slow pulse, while we move steadily against the tide.

How dim the night is overhead. The weighty clouds—that funereally roll upon a solemn march that is hardly motion—alone tell that air moves amongst them; here and there their low-laid masses give, through torn gaps, glimpses of a higher sky laden with soft mist that cannot be called light, and faintly tells us that the moon is not far off. Towards the sun-set's long line of sordid fire, that lingers yet, the land now stretches a wild and desolate level of heath and gorse, whence my rowing has brought us. The faint streak is drawn upon the margin of the sky, and earth looks lifeless, gloomy, and motionless, as though the day were dead upon the plains, and night reigned for ever.—*Macmillan's Magazine*.

THE YEAR 1866.—The year 1866 will stand conspicuous in social history for its fatal accidents and melancholy disasters. Storm by sea, desolating hurricanes in the tropics, fearful shipwrecks in all parts of the globe, famines in the far East, conflagrations in the far West and Japan, our flocks desolated by murrain, crops destroyed by rain, a war begun and finished in Central Europe, increased armaments and threats of war, rumbling in the crater of the volcanic Eastern question, floods sweeping with destructive violence over whole countries; and, finally, a succession of colliery explosions, following each other like claps of thunder, and all attended with the most frightful havoc—these are the striking incidents which have gloomily illustrated the story of the expiring year.



[THE OLD MAID'S SOLILOQUY.]

CHILLINGWORTH.

THE most treacherous spot imaginable. The long grass hid little black pools of water, and at every step, whichever foot Miss Chillingworth happened to have foremost, sank deeper into the mud.

Regina Arnold remained safe and dry-shod under the great beech-tree at the edge of the morass, calling: "Do come back! You'll never get out if you go any farther."

"Then I'll stay here," answered Miss Chillingworth. "I am determined to have that beauty! There he is; I've got him!"

She gave her little net a sweep that nearly made her lose her footing; but it was empty when she drew it towards her.

"He's off again," she cried, disconsolately. "Oh, dear! he was such a prince! There he is!"

"I never knew anybody so crazy," retorted Regina. "Let me alone," laughed Miss Chillingworth. "If it were a butterfly without wings, that could dance a gallop, I suppose it wouldn't be so foolish."

She made another dart after the fugitive, but he fluttered off; and Miss Chillingworth waded a little farther into the bog and stood apostrophizing him, while her friend alternately laughed and scolded her for her folly.

"There he goes," cried the pursuer. "Oh, Regina! he's coming towards you; throw your handkerchief at him!"

Regina ran down to the edge of the grass, and the butterfly flew towards her; while Miss Chillingworth stumbled back through the mud as best she might. But Regina was not quick enough, and the butterfly flapped his wings in her face in great triumph.

"Oh! you have let him go!" said Miss Chilling-

worth, stopping to get breath. "But I will have him."

She was successful at last; and just as she succeeded in getting her prize safe in a basket, and her companion was laughing heartily, a gentleman came up the hill towards them.

"What is it all about?" he asked. "May I laugh, too?"

"Certainly," said Miss Chillingworth; "but I have the best right, if there be any truth in proverbs."

She looked down at her ankles—they were in a dreadful state. The bottom of her pretty petticoat was a mass of wet; the balmorals that had made her feet look so slender when she put them on for that walk, were out of all shape. But Miss Chillingworth was a woman of nerve, and quick in her movements, if she did have trouble in catching the butterfly.

She gave a mysterious pull at her dress somewhere, and the long skirt, that had been so gracefully festooned over the marvellous petticoat, fell discreetly—and one shake made it hide her misfortunes.

By the time Mark Foster came up she sat under the tree, calmly fanning herself with her hat.

They explained to him the cause of their mirth, and Miss Chillingworth let him have a peep at the butterfly. A great golden-and-red one, lying quietly at the bottom of the basket, and taking captivity with a placidity which was a lesson.

"It's all artfulness," said Miss Chillingworth; "he'd be out like a flash, give him but a ghost of a chance. Mr. Foster, if you do move the cover and lose him, I'll banish you into the middle of the bog."

"Miss Chillingworth's prisoners never escape; everybody knows that," he said, gallantly.

"Butterflies are such unsubstantial creatures—they are hard to hold," she answered, with a wicked laugh.

"Satirical," said he; "but it doesn't touch me. I am a working-man."

"I think your conscience must have been touched," rejoined Regina Arnold, "or you would not have denied so quickly."

"My dear," said Miss Chillingworth, "conscience is a feminine word; the other species doesn't know the name or the article."

"I don't belong to a species," said Mark.

"I must go home," said Miss Chillingworth, shivering a little; "I forgot my feet."

"That is what Tom Winter said he never could do," returned Foster.

"Don't remind me of that man," said she; "a beau grown stout—such a stupid goose."

She walked rapidly down the hill, carrying her basket carefully; the others followed. Down through what was the strawberry-field in the season, and came out by the spring at the back of the grounds.

Miss Chillingworth had walked very rapidly, for she had no intention of catching a cold along with her butterfly.

As she was passing up through the garden she looked back at the pair. They had stopped at the spring. Regina was leaning on the end of the rustic seat, and he was talking to her, looking down into her face.

Miss Chillingworth stood still a second, the flush had died out of her cheeks.

"I never thought of that," said she, under her breath. "Well, I needn't catch my death looking on."

She went into the house and straight up to her room, arranging everything in an orderly way. First the butterfly was cared for; then she changed her dress; and then she walked to the window that had a view of the path along which she had come.

The two were approaching the house; she could see their faces very plainly. She had never seen Regina Arnold look so pretty. As for Foster, he never was handsome, but he was something better—tall, well made, with a face full of intellect.

They disappeared. Miss Chillingworth stood a little longer at the window, and looked out over the landscape growing grayer with the approach of evening—it had been a soft, hazy autumn day.

"Growing grayer," said she, with a half smile that was very sad; "so does life."

She walked up and down the room awhile. Suddenly she stopped before the glass and gazed at herself.

She saw a handsome face, past the bloom of youth. The thick dark hair was braided back from a singularly broad, full forehead; the eyes were dark-gray, black at times; and the mouth would have looked a shade too determined if it had not had a trick of smiling.

"Sally Chillingworth," said she, suddenly, "you are thirty-five years old; yes, more than that—eight months and some days. Have you waited till this time to make a fool of yourself? I wouldn't have believed it of you—I wouldn't. I always knew you were silly; that you had not half the brains people gave you credit for; but you're a greater fool than I thought you."

She laughed outright; but there came one little choking sob after—only one.

Miss Chillingworth completed her toilet with the utmost composure; and a very elegant woman she was as she entered the room where her guests were assembled.

While they waited for dinner she told the story of the butterfly chase with such embellishments that everybody shrieked with laughter; and they all vowed to each other that actually she grew handsomer and wittier every year.

Sally Chillingworth told the exact truth about her age as she stood before the glass; but her life in a certain way, a very pleasant way too, had been a great success.

She began her career in society as a beauty and a belle; she had been more courted, yes, I really believe, more loved, than any girl of her day. Every year had only made her position more enviable. She had excellent abilities, the most finely cultivated tastes, and before twenty-five even had been a leader in society.

She had money; a quiet nonentity of a sister, twenty years older than herself, to live with her. So she had a house, made it the most charming place imaginable out of a novel; and surely the wheels of life could not roll heavily for her.

The only wonder was why she had never married; she would have been puzzled to tell herself. Once, when a mere girl, she had fancied young Murray.

He began life so brilliantly; but he died just in the dawning of his reputation. She had not known him long. He had never told her so, but she sometimes thought he loved her, and she had dreamed a great deal about him and his career.

Still the thing had been too vague for regret to be an actual sorrow. She never supposed that his

death had anything to do with her not marrying. But what was possible, and probably the truth, is that the idol she had made of him left other men poor and common-place, till she had passed the age when neither man nor woman who leads a worldly life can have the heart easily stirred.

The winter before Mark Foster had been introduced to her, and had become a frequent visitor at her house. They suited each other in various ways, and the acquaintance grew into a friendly intimacy.

He was a lawyer—a successful one; and it became a habit with him to talk to Miss Chillingworth with an ease and freedom he had never done to anybody else. She was worth ten years of experience to him, with her woman's wit, her warm sympathies, and her clear head.

So they had gone on, and never once did it occur to Sally that there was any feeling in her heart for that man other than she might have had for a brother, a younger brother—for he was younger.

About twenty-eight he was, and Sally had lived so much alone that she had grown to consider herself almost a middle-aged woman.

Every summer she had a succession of agreeable visitors at her country home, which she loved because she had lived there when a child; and Mark had come several times this season, and taken his position among whatever party happened to be there.

Regina Arnold was a great favourite with Miss Chillingworth—a bright, sweet girl, with a world of enthusiasm for her friend, and just at the pleasantest season of early womanhood. Fast the "coming out" age, and not in sight of the time when the gilding begins to wear off and show the stains underneath, when the flowers prove to be artificial, and looking about at the human faces, one sees the weariness and emptiness beneath.

To-night, while she performed her duties as hostess in the pleasantest, most graceful way, Miss Chillingworth never once forgot the revelation which came so suddenly upon her during that afternoon walk.

There was more occupation than usual. People came from the neighbourhood—for the lake made the place a favourite summer resort—but Miss Chillingworth was equal to the occasion.

There were music and dancing, and, moreover, she succeeded in giving them an impromptu supper. I don't know how she managed such things, other peoples' servants would rebel; but, somehow, in her house, whatever she desired to have done was done without trouble.

Mark Foster was less assistance to her than usual in entertaining her guests; but Miss Chillingworth did not remind him of his negligence.

Once she found herself mattering:

"Always alone—I am always that."

Then she was vexed with herself for being sentimental at such a time.

She went off to dance with somebody; then she took a hand at whist, to please some elderly people; and just as she arose from the table she saw Foster and Regina Arnold come in.

She knew when they went out if nobody else did, and that they had been half an hour walking about on the lawn in the moonlight that shone so bright and soft upon the grass.

The party broke up at last, and Miss Chillingworth retired to her room. She met Regina in the hall.

"Are you sleepy?" her friend asked.

"No; only tired. I shall go to bed."

It had been a custom with them to sit together after sensible people were asleep, but this evening Miss Chillingworth was not equal to conversation, and she went away.

"She might confide in me," she thought as she opened the door; "I couldn't endure it to-night. I'm not safe."

She went up to her dressing-table to put out the light—it annoyed her. She saw the butterfly in its little wicker prison.

"Oh, have your liberty!" said she; and, going to the open window, she raised the lid of the basket.

The butterfly poised himself for an instant on the edge, then fluttered through the moonlight to find a place of refuge.

"I never shall want to catch another," thought Miss Chillingworth. "I think this evening has been a week long."

She sat there in the quiet light, and, as she herself would have said, "looked things full in the face."

She was not a woman to shrink from self-examination because it gave her pain; the more she suffered the more certain she felt that the wound was deep and required instant probing.

She loved this man—she knew it now.

"I, Sally Chillingworth," said she, in her quaint way, that would not desert her, even in the midst of her pain. "I wonder why? Dear me! there are plenty of orphans, if I wanted to bring up a child!

But that's silly. He is a strong, good man, and I am not ashamed. Only I am thirty-five years old—thirty-five years, eight months, and some days."

She wondered if it would last. Could she be so weak as to love a man whose heart belonged to another woman? Then she felt very wicked. She thought to herself it would be easy, in one way or another, to separate them. For the first time she understood and could confess that it was natural for women to have such feelings as are described in books—perhaps to do the same treacherous, wicked things.

She shrank aside from this new revelation of herself. Oh! how many of us have done the same when the thwarting of some ruling desire has shown us, for the first time, the black capabilities which have proved the touching points of nature with the criminal and lost, whom before we had condemned with such virtuous unhesitation.

She loved this man!

She said the words over and over to herself, for they sounded strange. She, long past her youth, who had been so worshipped, to go through her girlhood, to the season when she believed herself safe; and now to love a man who had never thought of her but as a friend—who, perhaps, in spite of his kind heart, would have smiled at the bare idea of loving a woman years older than himself.

"I suppose it was my destiny," said Sally, after she had thought a long time. "I was too proud—I needed this discipline. I wonder if I shall use it right?"

She hoped so for a few moments—she prayed that she might. Then she shut out the moonlight and went to bed, and, lo! the dark thoughts came back blacker than ever, and all her faith was gone.

The tide ebbed—she was quiet once more. She lay there on her pillow and cried like a child, literally sobbed and gasped in a pitiful way, and there was nobody to hear—nobody but Him who helps us at last in His own wise way.

It was not particularly romantic, an old maid crying over her own heart; but, oh! it was worse than the troubles of earlier years.

Romance! Why, it is just that which gives a sort of charm to the sorrows of youth; but later they are terribly prompt and real.

A few days more and Miss Chillingworth's guests began to depart, like flocks of birds alarmed at the approach of autumn.

She did not know that it was in human nature to be so glad of anything as she was to see them go. Society is good, and friends are pleasant, but there are times when one would rather be surrounded by a troop of savages.

During the days which had intervened since the discovery she had made Miss Chillingworth had been kept so constantly occupied that there had been no possibility of any confidence between herself and Foster, or this pretty girl whose face had grown like sunshine.

There were such endless drives, pic-nics, and excursions of all sorts; and Miss Chillingworth was amusing the whole party, without relaxation, to such good purpose that when bed-time came Regina was tired enough to creep away, without having energy left for the evening conversations, in which she had so much delighted.

They were gone! Miss Chillingworth saw the last carriage drive off towards the station. Even her sister had been persuaded into the belief that there was a visit she was anxious to make, and had accepted that opportunity to go.

Mark Foster had taken her hand and held it in the old friendly way as he said:

"Do come early; I want you every day! I have scarcely seen you all this visit, and I have so many things to tell you."

"Put them down in that epic poem," she answered, gaily. "You will see me before a great while. I shouldn't like to put people's memories to a long test by absence, for fear they should forget all about me."

"There is not much danger of that! Your empire seems to grow more powerful every year."

She felt a very womanish, and a very natural pang, indeed, when he began to make any allusion to her years. She finished the hand-shaking speedily, and sent him off, while she dutifully listened to someone else's parting speech.

They were gone! The last sight she saw was Mark Foster seated by Regina in the open carriage. He was folding a shawl about her, and she was smiling.

Back into the house walked Miss Chillingworth, and for more than a week lived in complete solitude.

A week to be remembered, at least while this mortal shore keeps in sight—a week whose details would, perhaps, be tiresome; but at least she was alone.

Alone with her humiliation and her pain; and,

worst of all, with the dreadful thought which would constantly intrude—the future. What was she to do with the future?

A letter came from Mark Foster; she let it lie all day before gaining courage to open it. She knew as well what the pages contained as if she were a clairvoyant, reading them through envelope and all.

Then she could have beaten herself for her own folly. Was this all the strength she had gained? Afraid of a little more suffering—a mere pin's prick compared to what she had endured!

So that evening she read the letter—her fancy had not deceived her. He wrote to tell her, his best and dearest friend, of the great happiness which had occurred to him. He loved Regina—she was his own now. He could not lose a moment in letting her know, even before Regina's friends.

"For even this priceless blessing I owe to you," he said. "Except for you I might never have known her."

The next day a rainy, dull forenoon, just a hopeless drizzle, that would neither clear up nor be a genuine storm, ensued; and during the pattering of the drops she sat down to write her answer.

A letter full of quaint conceits and congratulations, cheerful, and pleasant, in Miss Chillingworth's best style.

Then she walked up and down the room and called herself names—an exercise which is at times a relief.

Towards sunset it began to rain violently, and directly walked Miss Chillingworth out into it. She should go mad if she stayed in the house one instant longer.

A few days more convinced her that it would not do to stay there any longer if she expected again to live among human beings.

She understood now how it so often happens that, after a great trouble, people lead a sort of hermit life, which grows more narrow and meaningless every year.

She had no intention of being wicked. Existence was not to come to an end, not even a reasonable enjoyment was to cease. This was something she was to live through and beyond—and she would do it, with heaven's help, Miss Chillingworth said to herself; then she remembered that, perhaps, if she had thought more of leaning upon the aid above this discipline might have been spared her.

So she went to make several visits which had been a long time due; and everywhere people cheered forth Miss Chillingworth's presence; and it resulted in quite a triumphal procession for her.

It was almost winter, and Miss Chillingworth had returned.

Straightway came Mark Foster in the utmost tribulation; his dream had been of brief continuance—there was trouble, indeed.

Regina's mother had consented unwillingly enough to the engagement between the young people—for it must be an indefinite one, since Mark had his fortune to make.

Now, Mrs. Arnold had no more relinquished the love of the pomps and vanities than the rest of us. She knew what it was to be poor; and she had not much faith in a love which could counterbalance even that evil. Besides, she had set her heart on pretty Regina—her youngest daughter—doing something especially brilliant in the matrimonial way.

Of course, she was disappointed, and very cross, knowing that she might have married either of half a dozen rich men. Don't be shocked—the old lady did not wish to martyrize her; but why couldn't the foolish thing have loved one of them?

You may talk as much like one of Tennyson's poems as you please, you would, probably, have thought just the same; so, hold your tongue, I have no patience with the way we delude ourselves.

Still she had given in because she would not make her child unhappy, being a good woman in the main.

But after a few weeks of happiness there came trouble; and it was natural the old lady should imagine the cause.

Somebody who hated Mark had raked up an old story. Mrs. Arnold had gone to Regina, who, of course, rejected it scornfully.

But she had energy enough to act the woman; and she accented Mr. Mark in a way which an angel could not have endured, insisting on an explanation in a fashion that could not fail to produce a quarrel.

They had it, and then Regina had to suffer the consequences. According to her mother, she had endured terrible insults; according to Mark, he had been outraged beyond endurance.

They drove her quite distracted between them; and at last Mark went away. Regina could not act directly in the face of her mother's commands, and Mark did not know where to begin to attack the slander.

So he came to Miss Chillingworth and poured out his griefs. She was kind; she bade him hope for the best; she gave him her sympathy.

Al! he might have pitied her if he could have known how evil thoughts whispered to her heart this was the time; she could have her happiness if she chose—fate threw it in her way.

She did not trust herself; she did not wait. She went straight to Mrs. Arnold and learned the whole story—it was not a pleasant one.

It happened some years ago, when Foster was a student at Amherst—a very old story in every way; and a poor, foolish girl paid the penalty of her trust and recklessness; and now the man was to expiate the sin he had called a boyish folly.

"You see how clear it is," said the old lady. "My dear, you can't blame me?"

"No," replied she. "If it be true I would rather see Regina dead than his wife."

But believe it? Nonsense to answer! If she could have killed the perpetrators of the slander it would have been a relief.

But something she could do—she would.

"My life is not ended," she said; "here is work! I will clear this up."

And she did; and when a woman like Miss Chillingworth tries she is not easily thwarted.

Late as it was in the season she made a journey; and on the very ground of the poor little tragedy she learned the exact truth.

The girl was dead now; but the man's name alone was correct. Mark had been two years away from college when the poor little tragedy was played out.

Armed with her proofs, Miss Chillingworth returned home; but she had not finished yet, and she chose to complete her work before she uttered a word. The pair for whom she toiled could afford to wait a little longer, since happiness stood smiling before them.

One of Miss Chillingworth's best friends was an old lawyer of immense wealth and reputation, and she wanted him to help her.

"Will you say no?" said she, when she walked into his private office, and told him she had come to ask a favour.

"Of course not," said he.

"Just to get rid of me," returned she; "that's the very reason I came here."

"Wise as a serpent, and innocent—"

"Yes, that's pretty," interrupted she. "Will you take another partner?"

He pretended to be confused, because he liked a joke, even when he was in haste.

"Really," said he, "you'll have to ask Anna Maria. If it's yourself I couldn't say no."

"You dreadful old Turk! And I a lone woman!" said Miss Chillingworth; and, as she had been very nervous all the morning, she took that occasion to laugh. "Now hear my story."

She told it; but not her own, by any means—but about Mark and Regina.

She wanted Mr. Amsted to offer him a partnership. Coming into the firm in that way, he still would not have the income, for a time, that was necessary to make everything bright. That want she proposed to fill up herself, with nobody to be the wiser.

And it was settled. Benefits are not difficult to confer if one be in earnest.

So that very day Mark Foster got his offer, and accepted it; and went to Miss Chillingworth to tell her of the good that had come too late.

She comforted him. The next morning she called on Mrs. Arnold, and as Regina was not present she told her of the golden luck which had befallen the discarded suitor.

Now Regina had pined herself away to a shadow during the past days.

"What a shame this story came up," said the mother, not thinking.

"If that were settled?"

"Oh! I couldn't say a word!"

"Then be at rest," said Miss Chillingworth, and she swept away the last shadow.

She even saw Regina; she would not, in any way, listen to the evil whispers: "Her work must be complete."

Then she sent for Mark Foster, and led him herself into Regina's presence.

"I can't stop to give you my blessing," said she. "I must dress for a dinner-party."

She went to the dinner and was the life of the evening.

When spring came the two were married, and Miss Chillingworth was there. I remember how handsome she looked the morning of the wedding—people talked about it for a week.

Nothing more! She did her duty; so we know that she lived through and beyond her trouble. Life can give no higher prize.

F. L. R.

THE TRADE MOVEMENT IN SYDNEY.—Delegates from the joiners', painters', bricklayers', and labourers' societies in Sydney have sent a memorial to

"The Amalgamated Society of the United Kingdom." The chief object of the memorial appears to be to dissuade English workmen of the idea that wages are high and work abundant in the colony or city of Sydney. On the contrary, they declare a great deal of distress exists; work is, and has long been, scarce; and wages, though apparently high, are really inadequate, from the high price of provisions, clothing, rents, &c. In the building trades 8s. to 10s. a day seem to be the average wages, while rents are something like 10s. to 20s. a week; bread 10d. a 4-lb. loaf; cabbages 8d. apiece; milk 8d. a quart; bacon and cheese 1s. 6d. per lb., and so on. Beef and mutton, however, do not seem to be so dear, being only 4d. per lb. It is remarkable that while our own workmen not only complain of masters taking more than a certain very small number of apprentices, but absolutely restrict them from doing it, compelling them, by threats of strike, to reduce the number of apprentices to the minimum, one of the causes of complaint urged in this memorial as being "of a very serious nature," is that "there is not the slightest indication on the part of employers to take as apprentices any of the thousands of young Arabs, as they are colonially called; and the consequences are, that they are entirely dependent on their parents."

OLIVER DARVEL.

CHAPTER XLIV.

On a balmy evening in June the little vessel came in sight of the bold headlands at the foot of which lay Llanmore, a very insignificant collection of fishermen's cottages, with no dwelling-house of any pretension near them.

Through a narrow gorge opening between the hills a glimpse of a green valley embosomed a silvery sheet of water was obtained. On the shore of this lovely lake stood the village church in which the lovers' vows were to be plighted before another day rolled around.

As the vessel drew near the shore the heart of Mabel gave a great bound, and she eagerly looked among the rustic groups collected on the rough landing, expecting to see him, but there was no one in sight bearing the slightest resemblance to Oliver, and she began to wonder who would come to receive her and conduct her to the place to which she was bound, when a carriage, drawn by two spirited ponies, came dashing from the ravine and drew up upon the pier.

Mr. Denton himself jumped from it and hustled on board. After greeting the party most cordially he said to Mabel, in a low tone:

"Mrs. Denton found out what was going on, for she would make me tell her, and insisted that she would come to the bridal. Of course I could not refuse the first request she has made of me since we were married, so I brought her here with me, and you will find that you have lost nothing by having a hostess to welcome you."

"This is indeed kindness," said Mabel, with emotion, and they passed out to the carriage.

Before her departure it had been settled that Mr. Denton should rejoin Oliver and await her arrival at Glencore, and Mabel was deeply grateful for his consideration for her in taking his wife into his confidence after Oliver was safe in his retreat, and bringing her hither to welcome them on their arrival.

"Everything is right, and you have only to place yourselves in the carriage and drive away to love and happiness," whispered Mr. Denton.

Mabel took her seat in the vehicle, with Mrs. Minturn beside her, and Amy on the front seat beside the banker, who had driven over himself unattended by a servant.

Mabel's trunks had been sent on with the exception of a small one containing a change of clothing, which was strapped on behind the carriage, and they drove rapidly away from the pier.

Entering the narrow gorge between the cliffs, they soon emerged into what looked like an enormous green basin girdled in by hills, in the centre of which gleamed the waters of the miniature lake which gave a name to the spot. On its shore stood a small Gothic church, with a parsonage attached to it, and a quarter of a mile distant was the rustic cottage purchased by Mr. Denton so lately that, as yet, he had had no opportunity to enlarge or improve it.

The building was almost embowered in foliage, and its walls were covered with a thick matting of ivy which imparted a most picturesque charm to its humble exterior. When the carriage drew up in front of the house a fair and very youthful-looking woman, with blonde curls flying about her face, sprang from the door, followed by Oliver, who looked much

stronger than when he left London, and the light of a great happiness shone in his eyes as he received Mabel in his arms and fervently pressed her to his heart.

Mrs. Denton cried out:

"Everything is ready for the bridal, Miss Tilson; and I am so charmed with the romance of the whole thing! I tormented my poor spouse till he had to tell me all about your plans, and you see I am here to help you carry them out."

"And I am most grateful to you for your goodness, Mrs. Denton. I did not think you would trouble yourself to make so long a journey on my account."

"That only proves how little you know me, my dear. But pray come in, all of you, and see the result of our labours. Mr. Oliver and I have been decorating our rural bower all the morning, and it really looks beautiful."

On entering the rough farmhouse they found that it had really been converted into a floral temple. The rafters were entwined with evergreens, the walls covered with a gay chintz on which bouquets of roses attempted to rival the natural flowers that were placed on stands in every available spot.

The cottage contained but five rooms, one of which was given up to the old woman who took care of the place. Two of the remaining four were appropriated to the guests. Mr. Denton had ventured to bring but one servant with him, a man who acted as butler and coachman; and the city-bred wife declared this scrambling sort of *al fresco* life they were compelled to lead was the most charming improvement on the stately dullness of her London experience.

An exquisite little room, fragrant with the breath of flowers, was assigned to Mabel; and one on the opposite side of the wide central apartment was appropriated to Mrs. Minturn and Amy, the last of whom was enchanted with everything she saw.

Mrs. Denton conducted the bride elect into the fairy bower she had prepared for her, and after enjoying her pleased surprise she said:

"After tea is served we will walk down to the chapel, where we shall find the curate, Mr. Lawrence, ready to perform the important service, which Mr. Denton does not think it expedient to delay. Arrange your toilet, therefore, my dear Miss Tilson, for the greatest event of a woman's life."

Mabel had brought with her a bridal dress and veil, for she cherished some superstitions, and one of them was that a happy bride must always receive the nuptial benediction in spotless white. She had therefore provided a simple and inexpensive dress as best suited to the occasion, and she now hastened to take it from the box in which it had been packed.

After awhile Mrs. Minturn came in to assist her in completing her toilet, and she was soon arrayed in her soft flowing muslin, with the lace veil and orange flowers upon her head. During all this time Mabel was scarcely thinking of her own appearance, for she was mentally praying for a blessing on the union she was about to form, and asking the protection of heaven for the man of her choice.

Oliver had found an opportunity to assure her that nothing suspicious had occurred since his arrival at Glencore, and he believed there was no cause to apprehend danger to himself, so the tremulous pulsations of his bride's heart were not occasioned by any immediate dread on his account, yet she found it impossible to repress the lurking sense of uneasiness that would not be set at rest, when a tap came to the door, and the voice of Oliver spoke through it:

"Come, love, all is ready, and the clergyman awaits our appearance at the altar."

Her heart gave one great bound, and then Mabel outwardly composed herself and stepped into the large room into which the whole party awaited her appearance.

As quietly as if nothing unusual were about to happen, they walked towards the little church through a private road leading from a cottage. The clergyman in his robes stood within the altar rails, awaiting their appearance, and the two long-tried lovers knelt side by side and pledged their vows to each other.

In a few moments the impressive ceremony was over; Oliver clasped the hand of his bride and exultingly whispered:

"The sun crowned you with his glory when you knelt beside me, Mabel, and it shall be typical of your future life. The adage says, 'Happy is the bride the sun shines on,' and I mean to make it true in your case."

"Man proposes and heaven disposes," quoted Mabel, in reply. "I only hope, dearest Oliver, that you will be granted the power to do so; I do not

doubt your will to make me the most blessed of my sex."

"We will not permit a doubt on that score to intrude on us in this hour, Mabel. I believe that I am quite safe now, so dismiss all fears, and smile on me as you did in that last happy day at Fernely."

She turned her love-lit eyes upon him, and Oliver felt as if the sun of his life had indeed arisen upon him.

They moved towards the vestry, where the register was signed, and the bridal party returned to the cottage to partake of a sumptuous breakfast which Mr. Denton had insisted on providing.

As the Albatross was not to sail for ten days yet, Mr. Denton insisted that it would be safer for the newly wedded pair to spend the intervening time at Glencore than in the city of Liverpool; and in this miniature Eden they gladly consented to linger, enjoying a happiness as brief and bright as that of our first parents before sin and temptation entered their paradise.

The weather was enchanting; the sylvan nook in which the cottage was situated was filled with shady walks and besky dells, through which the united lovers were never weary of wandering, and three happier days were never spent by mortal creatures than those passed by Oliver and his bride in the seclusion of this unknown valley.

Mrs. Denton and Amy formed a great friendship for each other, and had Mabel been willing to part from her young *protégée* the baker's wife would gladly have adopted and reared her as her own daughter.

To this, however, neither Oliver nor his wife would consent, for Oliver had become almost as tenderly attached to the child as Mabel was, and on the morning of their departure Amy set out with them on the long pilgrimage they had undertaken.

Mr. Denton had already transferred the bulk of Mrs. Darvel's property to the colonies in her own name, and both he and his wife parted from the newly wedded pair with many wishes for their future happiness and prosperity.

The first twenty miles of the journey were performed in the baker's carriage; then the party took the stage from a small interior town and leisurely travelled towards Liverpool, for they did not wish to arrive there till the Albatross was on the eve of sailing.

After the first day's journey Oliver assumed the character of his wife's servant, and he hoped that he had successfully evaded those who might have been set upon his track.

CHAPTER XLV

ON the evening of a dull, cloudy day our party of travellers were set down at a quiet inn not very far from the waterside. The direction to this place had been furnished by Mr. Denton, who had written to a mercantile firm, with which he had dealings, to engage rooms for two ladies with a child and servant.

They found the apartments in readiness to receive them, and gladly took possession of them, for the long journey had greatly fatigued them.

On the morning after their arrival Oliver left his wife and her friend comfortably established in their new quarters, and went to call on Messrs. Wilkins and Co., bearing with him a letter of introduction to them as Mr. Oliver.

He was received by the junior partner with great courtesy, and in reply to his inquiries as to when the Albatross would sail, Mr. Weston informed him that by night she would be ready to leave the pier, and if he intended to go by her he had better make arrangements to go on board as soon as possible.

When he expressed a wish to visit the ship and inspect the accommodation provided for two ladies who had been placed under his protection, one of the clerks was told to accompany him to the vessel.

Thus far all seemed safe enough, and Oliver began to feel as if freedom from dread would soon be his; so, in happy unconsciousness of the danger that followed him so closely, he took his way to the wharf.

He found the captain, a bluff, hearty-looking sailor, on board, and he himself pointed out the locality of the cabins secured for him by Wilkins and Co. Oliver was satisfied to find that they were among the best in the vessel, and he returned to Mabel in excellent spirits to report how smoothly every business transaction had been arranged.

Both looked hopefully to the future that lay before them, and for the first time the latent fear that something might yet happen to mar her newly found happiness was discarded from the mind of Mabel.

Immediately after an early dinner the luggage

which had been forwarded to Wilkins and Co. was sent on board the ship, and an hour after the two ladies took possession of the rooms assigned them. After seeing them safe in their quarters Oliver returned on shore. As everything had gone so smoothly with him, he regretted that he had not retained his own name and position, that he might openly have claimed Mabel as his wife, and not waited till their arrival in Canada to make known the tie that existed between them.

He saw placards, recently put up, offering a large reward for the arrest of a man calling himself Eugene Ledra, but whose real name was Oliver Darvel. Then followed an accurate description of his person, and poor Oliver fervently wished that he had taken more pains to disguise himself than he had lately deemed necessary.

His heart sank within him as this proved that his enemies were still in pursuit of him, so there was no means of avoiding the risk of being recognized.

Summoning all his coolness to his assistance, with a rapid step and lightened heart he turned in the direction of the pier, unconscious that he was followed by a man, muffled in a heavy overcoat, who carefully accommodated his pace to that of his intended victim.

The day had been gloomy, and as the evening drew on a thick fog began to shroud every object in obscurity. By the time Oliver had regained the pier the ship had loosened her moorings and dropped down the stream, where she awaited the arrival of the passengers who were yet to come on board.

Absorbed by his own emotions of thankful joy in the thought that he was soon to leave danger and dread behind him, Oliver gave no heed to the footfalls that steadily echoed his own. He reached the waterside, called a wherry, and bargained with the man to take him to the Albatross. Just as he was in the act of springing into it a heavy hand was placed upon his shoulder, and a rough voice said:

"You're my prisoner; you'll not be let off this time, my oovey, sharp as you think you are."

For an instant Oliver was paralyzed, but sudden strength came to him, and he violently tore himself from the man's grasp, sprang into the boat, and seizing an oar, he pushed the boat from the pier; the officer lost his balance and fell, but he did not roll into the water, and, struggling to his feet, he called out to the boatman:

"Now, Tony, you know your duty; you've got the bracelets; clap 'em on, and bring that feller back agin in short order."

Before Oliver could understand the drift of his words a blow from behind was struck upon his head, which stunned him, and he fell helpless at the feet of his foe.

When he recovered sufficiently to understand what had happened to him he found himself handcuffed, and about to be lifted on shore again. He cried out:

"Who are you, and what do you mean by this attack on a peaceful passenger about to embark for a foreign land?"

"Oh! I daresay; the same gammon allers. You is hinnercent as a babe now, I s'pose, and I'm liable to damages for bringing you up short. We'll see about that, young man, and I rather think you're the one that'll come out o' the little end of the horn this time. It is only a doing of my duty, and Tony here was waiting to help me secure you when he seed me a folerling of you. I'm a p'lesseman, sent a puppus to take you, an' you knows well enough what it's for, spite of this hullabaloo."

"I have done nothing to merit arrest," replied Oliver, "and it is shameful to seize on me in this manner, for I have left ladies on board a ship about to sail, unprovided with passports. I am afraid they will have much difficulty if I am so unceremoniously removed. Only let me go on board the Albatross for a few moments that I may speak with my wife, for she is expecting me there every moment. Then I promise to go quietly with you."

To this entreaty the policeman calmly replied:

"I knows—I knows; but all that has been attended to beforehand. I knows that a young gal, and a rich one, too, was fool enough to marry you down there in Wales a week ago. I was at the wedding, though I wasn't partly invited to attend. I stood outside the church, and listened when you did sich a mean thing as to make a unsuspecting creetur your wife, when you knowed that you was liable to be tuck up, at any moment, for yer villany. I ain't lost sight on you since that evening, Mr. Whatever-yen-may-call-yourself, for you has more names'n one, like all the rest o' your sort. As to the wimmen folks, their passports has been sent to the captain, and they'll

have no trouble about 'em. Them you has I shall take possession of myself, so hand 'em out without any more palaver."

"Oh, heavens!" exclaimed Oliver, in anguish, "will my Mabel, my love, my life, be sent far from me while I am held here in durance vile? At least let me write her a line to let her know in what a position I am."

"No, thank you," was the imperturbable reply. "It's no use to stop the voyage of your poor wife. Let her get as far away from you as she can, for you're not likely to prove either a credit or a comfort to her. The fog is coming on, and the ship'll go on her way in an hour; the captain has his instructions to keep from your wife what he knew was going to happen to you afore you was allowed to git back to his ship, and till to-morrow mornin' she won't know that you are not on board. By that time she will be far out at sea."

As he uttered this assurance a cab drew up close beside them, and the prisoner was thrust into the vehicle. The policeman sprang in after, took his seat beside him, and the driver started off at a rapid pace.

Language cannot depict the rage, anguish and dread that by turns assailed the unfortunate young man, to all of which he was denied utterance.

The wheels of the cab soon ceased to clatter over the pavements, and Oliver felt sure that he had been taken many miles before a stoppage was made.

The night was intensely dark, and when the carriage at length drew up a lantern held by a tall man on the roadside flashed on a high brick wall, with iron spikes on the top. A door in this wall unclosed, and a second man came out and asked, in a tone of solicitude:

"Have you got him, Jem?"

"Yes, safe enough this time. You'll have to keep a strict watch on him, I can tell you."

"Oh, that's the way with all on 'em when they first comes in, but we has a way to break 'em in what never fails. Come, tumble out, you feller there, or old Sawbones'll be a rowing me for idling."

Jem descended, and then assisted Oliver to alight, and said:

"There, Bob; I've delivered him up safe to you, and it's your business now to see that he don't cut and run."

The larger of the two men grasped Oliver's arm in a vice-like grip, and hurried him through the door. When he passed this he found himself in what seemed an immense enclosure, with trees scattered in groups about it; but the faint and imperfect light emitted by the lantern his companion carried enabled him to judge very imperfectly of his situation.

Oliver turned to his conductor and asked:

"Where am I, and who are you, who assume the right to hold a free man in bondage?"

"You'll know soon enough," was the surly reply.

"I'm taking you to head quarters now."

No farther word was spoken between them till they reached the house—a large stone structure, that loomed gloomily from the darkness. A door opened to the touch of his conductor, and the two stood in a wide hall which was intersected at right angles by another corridor, on which were many doors; and Oliver, with a shudder, saw that the walls of the building were extremely massive, and all the doors in sight were heavily plated with iron.

Strange cries reached his ears, and a cold perspiration burst forth upon him, for he began now to comprehend that it was not the law which had laid its grasp upon him, as he had hitherto believed, but the heavy hand of arbitrary power, wielded by a foreigner in free England that had thrust him into a private lunatic asylum.

He felt sure that he had been entrapped into a madhouse, and in despair he thought of the terrible abuses which it was known were at that day practised in institutions of the kind.

Oliver had little time to collect his thoughts before a door opened, and he was hustled into a room brilliantly lighted. This was occupied by a man, who leisurely puffed at his meerschaum, as if smoking were the greatest luxury of his life.

In this person Oliver instantly recognized his fascinating travelling companion, M. Latrobe, and his heart died within him, for he knew that mercy was a feeling unknown to this man's nature. He was a small, wiry-looking person, with regular features, and eyes of vivid blackness deeply set in his head.

Those eyes scintillated in every direction with a cruel, serpent-like glare; yet his voice was singularly soft and flexible, and his manner, when he chose to play the agreeable, possessed a wonderful

power of charming those with whom he was brought into contact.

When the door was closed and Oliver was left alone with him, Latrobe indolently lifted his eyes, and after watching the curling smoke that issued from his lips till it dissipated into thin air, he removed the pipe, and courteously said:

"Ah, M. Ledru, how do you do? I am really happy to renew our acquaintance. We parted rather abruptly, but this meeting makes amends for all. Pray be seated; why—pon my word—what does this mean? Have those creatures really offered you the indignity of manacles? Inconsiderate dogs! Allow me—"

And with an air of most perfect high breeding he unlocked the fetters and threw them on the floor.

When he could speak Oliver passionately said:

"So it is you, then, who have torn me from love and happiness—you to whom I am indebted for this illegal arrest? By what right, M. Latrobe, do you persecute me thus?"

"Softly—softly, my young friend. Calm yourself, for this impetuosity will only prove that you have not been brought hither without good cause. I think you understand very well why this has happened to you, so I shall not waste words in explanation. You are in a madhouse. Hark!—do you not hear the maniacs' shrieks? At all hours of the day and night will that be your music till you answer the question which has hitherto been so vainly propounded—*Where is the child?*"

"Have I not sworn to you that I do not know?" cried Oliver, in agony. "I never knew; yet you refuse to believe me. You might long ago have satisfied yourself that I am not Ledru had you desired to do so. Go with me to the woman I have just made my wife; take me to London and summon Mr. Denton, the well-known banker, to prove to you that I am not the person for whom you mistake me. They will give you indisputable evidence that I am Oliver Darvel, the cousin of my wife, and the nephew of John Tilson, a respectable merchant. You will then be convinced that the story I have invariably told is true in every particular."

Latrobe cynically replied:

"I know—I know all that they can tell me, M. Ledru, for I have kept myself constantly informed of your affairs. I am aware that you have successfully passed yourself off as the unhappy young man who committed suicide; but that you are really Oliver Darvel I do not believe. You are only a most accomplished swindler, who has inveigled an innocent young girl into marrying you that you may secure the wealth she holds in her possession. Had I known of your intention to make her your wife before you set out upon your foreign tour I should have caused you to be seized on before such a shameful wrong to her was completed. But she is freed from you at all events, for she has gone upon her voyage, and you are here to expiate your crime against her."

"I have committed no crime that can call for your interference. Mabel knows that I am the person I call myself, and that will suffice for her, in spite of all you can urge to embitter her against me. But what is your purpose in bringing me to such a place as this?"

"You are to remain here under treatment till you disclose the secret it is so important to my employer to learn. I again ask—*Where is the child?*"

"I am convinced that she is dead; such being the case, why will you persist in persecuting me in this shameful manner? Herman, who rescued me from your infernal power in Germany, assured me that he had seen her grave. He knew that I was not the person for whom you chose to take me, and the same evidence that convinced him should be sufficient for you."

"But it is not. As to the fate of the child, Herman was deceived. She is not dead—I am sure of that. The man under whose care she was placed proved faithless to the mother, though faithful to the child. He suspected that Mrs. Walden, through whose agency the little girl had been placed with him, had been bribed to destroy her by slow poison. Confectionary sent to her from London made her so seriously ill that Durham was convinced it was intended to remove her. He had heard nothing from you for some time, and as money no longer came to him through you, he determined to get rid of the child and save her life at the same time."

"His sister, who had the chief charge of the Lady Irene, and was tenderly attached to her, walked in the park one evening with her young protégée. The child fell asleep, and slept so heavily that there was no difficulty in transferring her to her brother, who removed her to some place you can reveal, for it is

believed that she was placed in your care. Durham and his sister have disappeared, leaving no clue behind them, and you will never be permitted to escape until you point out her asylum."

A startling and bewildering light fell upon Oliver Darvel's mind. This revelation tallied so exactly with Amy's account of her abduction that he had no doubts left that Mabel's suspicions had been correct, and the little wail so strangely thrown on her protection was no other than the heiress of Lichtenfels.

With the conviction came the temptation to save himself by the sacrifice of this helpless innocent, but he instantly rejected it as unworthy of his manhood. He knew that Mabel would mourn Amy's loss as much as if the child were really her own; and he himself had become so tenderly attached to her that the thought of giving her up to the fate he felt sure would be awarded her filled him with horror. He felt that he could die sooner than be guilty of such treachery, for every noble and manly instinct in his nature revolted from the thought of betraying the certainty of his own mind that Amy and the heiress of Lichtenfels were one.

The changes his countenance underwent while these thoughts passed through his mind were noticed by the astute observer, who sat looking steadily upon him, and he sarcastically asked:

"Do you still persist in denying all complicity with the person who removed the child from Durham Hall? For you know that was the place from which she was taken."

"I did not know it before, but I am glad to gain that information. I can with truth deny all complicity with the person to whom you refer, for I never heard of him before this night."

"You are incorrigible, I perceive. But a few weeks' discipline in these walls will either bring you to your senses or make you as mad as those that surround you."

He rang a bell sharply; a side door instantly opened, and the head-keeper of the establishment entered. Latrobe pointed to Oliver, and the man nodded and asked:

"What number is the gentleman, sir?"

"Number 86, and here is the prescription. The doctor sent it to me. Listen, M. Ledru, and hear what is preparing for you."

Latrobe took a slip of paper from the table, and read aloud:

"Alarming case of aberration of mind; entire loss of memory, occasioned, perhaps, by a rush of blood to the brain. Cataplasms to be applied to the feet; a blister on the chest, and ice used upon the head. With this treatment reaction is hoped for; when the patient's memory returns the disease will be pretty well subdued, and there may be some hope of his restoration to his friends. Should it fail, there will be little chance for him ever to leave these walls alive."

"This is infamous!" cried Oliver; "I am not a madman, and I will never submit to be treated as one. In place of trying to cure me of that disease all your efforts are intended to produce insanity."

Latrobe spoke as impassively as if this passionate remonstrance had not been uttered:

"Number eighty-five, you will be removed to your cell by this man, whose name is Jabex Brown. He understands why you are incarcerated here, M. Ledru, and you are handed over to his tender mercies because he knows how to use every species of torture tolerated in an institution of this kind. Remember, through all, that you have only to name the asylum of the child, and in half an hour after you will be at liberty to go whither you please."

"I have already said that it was out of my power to do that," said Oliver.

"Then Brown will do his duty. Remove the patient!"

That tall, muscular man, with a brutal animal face, had been well chosen for the part he was to perform. As he advanced towards Oliver the latter made a sudden dash past him, gained the door, through which Brown had entered, and threw it open. A second keeper stationed there caught him in his vice-like grasp, while Latrobe stood laughing in the centre of the room.

"Oh, ho!—so you thought to escape, did you? You will never evade me again, M. Ledru, you may rest assured. If I were caught napping once it was only a warning not to be trapped a second time. Good-night—the ice-bath to your head will not be so uncomfortable this warm night, though the blister may inconvenience you a little. *Au revoir*, my dear sir. I shall call on you to-morrow and see how a night of torture has agreed with you; you don't look as if you could stand much."

Before Oliver could reply he was rudely taken away, and by the united efforts of the two keepers thrust into a narrow cell and securely strapped down to the iron bedstead it contained. He was then left alone, while they went to prepare the prescription ordered by a physician who had never seen him.

Oliver fully comprehended now that he had again fallen into the power of the ruthless Prince of Berchols, and he vainly tried to form a plan in his own mind by which it might be possible to save Amy from the fate that would surely be hers if her whereabouts were betrayed, and yet rescue himself from the horrors that surrounded him.

He despairingly thought of Mabel, going on her purposeless voyage, suffering agonies of doubt on his account; of her return to her native land, only to find that all clue to himself was lost; for she would soon discover that no authority from the law had arrested him. He was the victim of private vengeance, and if he died beneath the threatened tortures, or went mad, there would be no one to reveal his sad fate.

(To be continued.)

THE "BLACK SEA," WANDSWORTH COMMON.—This favourite spot is in danger of being destroyed. Hitherto a long lease has preserved it, but that protection has been removed. Can Earl Spencer legally sell the "Black Sea?" He was checked in his contemplated appropriation of portions of Wimbledon Common. Custom and long usage are against him. The inhabitants of the locality should be up and doing. Large portions have been enclosed, others destroyed, and a village is already spreading itself over the common.

SALMON INSTINCTS.—The salmon, when out of condition and unfit for human food, goes down to the sea. And what does he do there? Not a single human being knows what he does; but we do know, however, that he goes down a poor, miserable-looking, lean thing, but comes back a plump, fat, jelly, silver-scaled fellow. How he manages to get so fat is no business of ours; that is his look-out. We only know that he finds good food in the estuaries of rivers; and a most curious thing it is in the history of the salmon that, as the swallow returns to her own nest, the bee to its hive, or the pigeon to its own dove-cot, so the salmon always returns home to its own river, if not captured or destroyed by its numerous enemies during its journey.

EXTRAORDINARY LONGEVITY.—The obituary of the Times of Wednesday, the 80th ult., contained, perhaps, the most marvellous instances on record of prolonged existence of eight persons, viz., five gentlemen and three ladies, whose united ages amounted to 712 years, giving an average of exactly 89 years to each. Two ladies and two gentlemen were nonagenarians, the others were octogenarians. The oldest man had reached the great age of 96 years, the youngest only 80 years of age, whereas the most juvenile of the opposite sex was 87 years, and the oldest 93 years of age. The obituaries in this paper of the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th ult. were also remarkable for the great ages of 17 gentlemen and 11 ladies, the whole of the 28 being also nonagenarians and octogenarians.

THE HAIR-WORM.—In the stagnant pools near the river Naim there were great numbers of that singular worm called by the country people the hair-worm, from its exact resemblance to a horse-hair. In these pools there are thousands of them twisting and turning about like living hairs. The most singular thing regarding them is that if they are put for weeks in a drawer or elsewhere they will become as dry and brittle as it is possible for anything to be and to all appearance perfectly dead and shrivelled up, yet on being put into water they gradually come to life again and are as pliable and active as ever. The country people are firmly of opinion that they are nothing but horse-hair turned into living things by being for a long time in water of a certain quality. All water does not produce them alike. To the naked eye both extremities are quite the same in appearance. —*Tour in Switzerland.*

MARRIAGE AND LONGEVITY.—Dr. Stark, of the Scottish Register Office, has examined in his report, recently issued, on the year 1863, the influence of marriage on the death-rate of men; and the results, as shown in that year, are far more striking than those given in a previous report in relation to women. Between 20 and 25 years of age the death-rate of bachelors was found to be actually double that of married men; between 25 and 30 it was 137 per 1,000 among bachelors, and only 86 among married men; between 30 and 35 it was 147 as against 9 per 1,000, and so on at every quinquennial period, the difference in favour of the married gradually decreasing, but never

disappearing. At 60-65 the death-rate was 43·2 per 1,000 among bachelors, as against 33·8 among married men. The figures imply that bachelorhood is more destructive to life than unwholesome trades or unhealthy houses. The correctness of the conclusion is tested by estimating the mean age at death. Taking the period from 20 years to the close of life, the mean age at the death of the married men in Scotland in 1863 was within a small fraction of 60 years, and of the bachelors only 40 years. Or taking, as a more unexceptionable average in relation to the marriage of men, the period from the 25th year to the close of life, the mean age of the married men at death was 60·2-10th years, while that of the bachelors was only 47·7-10th years, giving a man a chance of living 11 years longer if he married than if he remained a bachelor. Dr. Stark maintains that as the army is almost entirely composed of bachelors the mortality of soldiers is represented unfairly when it is compared with that of the civil population generally, more than half of whom are married. The comparison should rather be with that of bachelors, and of bachelors living in towns, since soldiers are congregated in masses and usually occupy barracks in towns.

FACETIÆ.

AN enterprising shoemaker thinks he is safe in recommending clogs to fast young men.

In 1806 there lived in the town of Croydon three families named *Widdgoose, Sage and Onion*.

WHAT is that which, supporting its greatest breadth to be four inches, length nine inches, and depth three inches contains a solid foot?—A shoe.

JUST KIND O' WENT AWAY.

"Good-morning, Reuben."
"Morning, squire; very fine day for the crops."
"Yes, but what is the matter with your face, Reuben? You have had a fight, I fancy."
"Why, yes, squire, me and Jim Hockins we had an old grudge, and last night we fit it out."
"And which conquered, Reuben?"
"Well, squire, we fit considerable."
"Yea, yes, I know, but who beat?"
"Well, squire, we fit considerable, and—"
"Reuben, I suppose you ran?"
"Run I'd sooner die."
"Well, what was the result?"
"Well, squire, Jim fit strong, and I was down; good-morning, squire, there's that cow again."
"Well, what did you do?"
"Well, I didn't run, squire," said Reuben, sulkily, "I jist kind o' went away."

AN Irish servant being asked whether his master was within replied, "No." "When will he return?" "Oh, when master gives orders to say he is not at home we never know when he will come in."

AN EXCUSE FOR VANITY.—A young lady being told of her vanity while viewing herself intently in a mirror, calmly replied she was only looking to see if she had a headache.

"HAVE your cabbages tender hearts?" asked a duteous wife of a costermonger. "They can't have anything else, ma'm," was the reply, "for they've been with me crying about the streets all the morning."

SINGULARLY PROVOKING.—At the recent assizes a Lincolnshire farmer complained that whenever he went into a jury-box he was associated with eleven of the most obstinate fellows in creation, for they could never agree with him.

FORTUNE TELLING.

Not many evenings since the subject of fortune telling being introduced, several of the "angels" pleaded guilty to the soft impeachment of having written to Madame This and Madame That to furnish them leaves in their future history. Instances were mentioned of some very remarkable developments in certain cases.

R. was asked for his opinion. He replied: "So far as I am personally concerned I know more about myself than I wish to. I don't think any good comes of those things. I had a friend who dressed himself in lady's clothes, and called upon a celebrated propheteess. He did not believe she would discover the disguise, but he heard what made him exceedingly unhappy."

Here he ceased. A lady, much interested, asked: "What did she tell him?"

"She told him he was to marry soon, and become the mother of ten children."

The following communication has been sent from a remote town in Ireland:—"Sir,—I send you this note to inform you that a person qualified to compose poetry for a newspaper is on the look out for an office of that description, perhaps you would require

a composer should you require one you will send an answer immediately stating salary and whether the composer is required to compose a story underneath the poetry there could be three pieces of poetry sent by one post for your paper I daresay you do not print one every day if you do not require one yourself perhaps you would know some person that would require one the poetry can be in a nice plain handwriting so that it will be easily understood you will please give the address to anyone that would require a person of my description Address——Co.Dunegall Ireland."

THE ROMANCE OF THE THING.

Very young gentlemen and ladies fancy that popping the question must be a very romantic thing; but the real thing is frequently about as follows. (The site of the passionate scene is the sea shore, on which they were walking in early autumn):

Gentleman: "Well, miss, the long and short of it is this: here I am; you can take me or leave me."

Lady (scratching a gutter on the sand with her parasol): "Of course, I know, that's all nonsense."

Gentleman: "Nonsense! By jove, it isn't nonsense at all. Come, Jane, here I am; come, at any rate you can say something."

Lady: "Yes, I suppose I can say something."

Gentleman: "Well, which is it to be? will you take me or leave me?"

Lady (very slowly, and with a voice perhaps hardly articulate, carrying on, at the same time, her engineering works on a wider scale): "Well, I don't exactly want to leave you."

It will not do to be too practical; for instance, the organ in St. George's Church, Leeds, is blown by water power, and on Sunday morning it was useless owing to the water having been turned off at the main to enable the men to repair a pipe which had burst in the neighbourhood of the church.

AN Irish porter was shutting up a shop one rainy evening, not long since, when he took off his coat while putting up the shutters. When asked why he went out in his shirt-sleeves all in the rain, "Sure," says he, "don't I want a dry coat to go home in?"

AN American, boasting recently of the ship-building prowess of his countrymen, said that they made beautifully light steamers to run on the western rivers—"steamers that can jump over the sand-bar, float easily on wet grass, and are obliged to run to anchor when there is a heavy dew."

CONSISTENT.

"Mamma, Mr. Smith has invited me to go to Fairmount next Sunday afternoon—may I go?"

"What, my dear, when you know how the Rev. Mr. Jenks has warned us against the wickedness of riding in those street cabs on Sunday—never!"

"But, ma, he is going to take me in a carriage."

"Oh, if that is the case you have my permission, but under no circumstances must we encourage the running of those street cabs on Sunday."

Consistency, thou art a jewel.

THE WORST FUN OF THE YEAR.—A scientific gentleman, after searching diligently for the cause of the potato blight, has arrived at the conclusion that, from all the data furnished from the investigations of science thus far, we may confidently attribute it to the rot-lator-y movement of the earth.

BIDDY, THE TERTOTALLER.

"Biddy," said O'Mulligan to his wife, "it's a bad cowld ye have. A drop of the craytur 'ud do ye no harmum."

"Och, honey!" said Biddy, "I've taken the plidge, but ye can mix a drink, Jimmy, and force me to swally it."

LAUGHABLE SCENE WITH A DONKEY AT THE SHIELDS FERRY LANDING.—An old dame with a donkey and cart drove up to the entrance of the Shields landing-stage of the penny ferry, on the south side of the river, but, either from a natural timidity, or inherent stubbornness, the animal could not be induced to enter the ferry boat. Notwithstanding repeated physical efforts on the part of several stalwart onlookers, the donkey would move neither backwards nor forwards. It was suggested that it would, perhaps, go on board on its own account if released from the cart, and was accordingly accommodated; but this proved of no avail. What was to be done? The boat was ready for going, and so was the old woman, but not the donkey. At last one daring spirit proposed carrying the quadruped on board by main force, and seizing hold of its two fore legs, lifted it over his shoulders, and "went on his way rejoicing," amid the laughter of the spectators. But on approaching the ferry the donkey gave a sudden kick, pulling over his carrier, and both sprawled on the ground, the poor fellow having the worst of it by the donkey rolling on the top of him, much to his chagrin, and to the amusement of those standing around. With the combined efforts of a

strong body of men the beast was picked up, carried on board the boat and then crossed the river. But only the first act in this side-splitting burlesque had yet come off, for on the boat being moored on the north side of the river, another scene occurred, as grotesque as the former. The driver quietly took hold of the reins, evidently under the impression that the donkey would be too glad to get out of the boat. The old dame, however, was soon disabused of this idea, for the animal again showed its stupidity, and could not be got "to move on." It was then found necessary to resort to the plan which proved so successful on the south side—namely, that of carrying it out by main force. Accordingly it was again unyoked from the cart, and half a dozen of the workmen of the ferry laid hold of its legs and "shoulder-heighted it." While raising the donkey aloft it gave a hind kick, knocking one of his captors over and pulling the others down on the deck. Encouraged, however, by their previous efforts, they again laid hold of the donkey, and at length accomplished their difficult task.

A YOUNG lady who had but recently lost a lover to whom she was engaged, and whom she pretended "to love with undying affection," astonished her friends by marrying the deceased lover's rival. On being remonstrated with for her heartless conduct she replied that she "married Tom to prevent fretting herself to death for the loss of poor, dear Charley."

A SAILOR was describing a terrible storm at sea, from which the vessel barely escaped wreck and destruction, when a listener remarked that he (the sailor) must have suffered from death's thus staring him in the face. "Not a bit of it," replied the sailor; "we got the best of death." "How so?" "Why, there was about three hundred of us a-starin' him in the face, an' he couldn't stand it, an' so hauled his wind an' gin us a clear passage."

A PAPER tells of a visit to a cave near Augusta, Ga. While the party were within investigating the gloomy interior there was noticed an old coloured man standing on the outside, who was asked, "Say, uncle, why don't you go in?" "Ah, my master," said he, "de Lord knows I see trouble enough top of the earth, I don't go in dat hole a searching arter misery."

ADVERTISEMENTS for servants in which "none but Protestants" are told to apply used to be not uncommon; but an advertisement which appeared in the *Times* is a unique specimen of the requirements of "servantalism." Two young women want situations, "in a gentleman's or tradesman's family, in any capacity in which they might be useful. One is 17 years and the other 15;" but "no Ritualistic family need apply."

SUNBURN.—An awkward, ill-dressed man who was strolling about the park the other day attracted considerable attention, on account of his absurd appearance. Becoming at last conscious of the fact, he turned to a gentleman who was looking at him with open-mouthed surprise, and exclaimed, "Hallo, if you keep your mouth so wide open you'll sunburn your teeth," and walked away triumphant amid the laughter his ally called forth.

LIKE other things we find the Atlantic Cable must take its rest. All work and no rest would not suit even young Atlantic; accordingly the Atlantic Cable, and, we believe, other telegraph wires, enjoy a nap between daylight and two o'clock midday, after which time they are as lively as possible till early hours again—in fact, the telegraph comes home with the milk in the morning, and certainly has a right so to do.

A FRIEND, dining with Dr. Maginn, was complimenting him on the fine flavour of his wine, and begged to be informed of the merchant's name. "Oh, I get it from a house close by, just as I happen to want it," replied the host—the London tavern. "Indeed!" said the other; "a capital collar unquestionably, but have you not to pay rather an extravagant price for it?" "I don't know, I don't know," replied the doctor; "I believe they put down something in a book!"

CAB!—One of the measures of Reform proposed this session is the reform of our cab system, and it is one that is very much needed. We have just been looking over the *Handy Book of the Law of London Cabs*, and it strikes us that the readers of that capital compendium will be astonished to see what legislation there has been on behalf of the passenger, and yet with no result! Some of the rules are rather hard on cabby, but then, on the other hand, cabby as a rule is hard on his fare, so that things balance themselves in the end. After all there is nothing like Free Trade, and if that principle were applied to cabs the public would be better served. When we read the thirteen conditions, as to cleanliness, roominess, &c., which have to be complied with before a

cab is licensed, and remember the smelly, dirty, ramshackle, cramped vehicles that ply for hire, we can only come to the conclusion that the police supervision is a mockery. Of course the semi-military organization of Scotland Yard cannot descend to small details of the public convenience.—*Pun.*

THE WRITON!—A correspondent suggests that "mum" is used as a title for ladies on account of their well-known love of silence.—*Pun.*

ANT GOSPEL.—It is whispered that the reason why the forelegs of Sir Edwin's lions are so terribly swollen is that they represent an undertaking of such very long standing.—*Pun.*

HANDY.—Mr. P. Barlow has patented a watch which shows on its face only the figures of the hour and minute wanted, and which has no hands. It is a pity he cannot make his watch work in other ways. There are a good many businesses just now that would pay well for any scheme by which they might be kept going without hands and with no striking.—*Pun.*

WHAT IS THE (H)USE?—We see that Mr. Hughes, "the most rapid painter in the world," is advertising for those who were present at the accident in Regent's Park, and "also professional tragic models." Mr. Hughes, one of our first artists—of course, we mean, only, the first to Hughes-tilize a calamity for sensation purposes—is about to give a companion "picture" to the Santiago catastrophe. We should recommend the publication of engravings from these works to be entitled, in allusion to the style of the painting, "The Signa" of the Times.—*Pun.*

TO MEDICAL STUDENTS.—Be well up in all that is required of you, but above all, never be deficient in the sinews—of war.—*Punch.*

THE WRONGS OF IRELAND.

Bloated Saxon: "But surely it is not the fact that of late years the number of absentees among the Irish landlords has not so large as—"

Irish Guest: "O! big y'r par-d'n, sor! 'Give ye me wor-d 'I honour-r, me unhappie countree stea-ar-rus with m'th' priest t-hime!'"—*Punch.*

SCIENTIFIC INTELLIGENCE.—At the next meeting of the Medical Society of London a paper will be read "On the Backbone of the Nation."—*Punch.*

A CURIOUS yet veritable fact is here beneath related. A pretty brunette, pipe as a Murillo cherry in September, and about the same colour, went at the age of seventeen to the Mayor to be married to a gentleman of the convenient age of fifty-three. The Mayor then said to her, "Mademoiselle, do you consent to be the wife of Monsieur le Baron L—?" The very nut-brown young lady burst out laughing, and said, "How droll you are! This is the first time anyone has thought fit to ask me such a question. Certainly if I had been asked before I should have said, 'No,' but as it is, come on." Everyone was dreadfully shocked. A pretty prospect for the governor!

STATISTICS.

THE Registrar-General has completed his returns of the deaths in the eleven divisions of England and Wales in the year 1866. The south-eastern division as usual heads the list, with a mortality of only 19.42 per 1,000, although it includes many large towns, Brighton and Southampton among them; it is very rarely that a year's mortality in this division amounts to 20 per 1,000. Next come the eastern, the south-western, the south-midland, and the north-midland divisions, each of them having in 1866 a mortality of more than 20 but less than 21 per 1,000; the eastern division happened to have in 1866 the least mortality of the four, but the south-western generally holds that position.

AGRICULTURAL RETURNS.—England has a total area of 32,590,597 statute acres. Of these 7,400,170 are under corn crops, 2,750,048 under green crops, 760,979 under bare fallow, 2,298,087 under clover and artificial and other grasses under rotation, and 8,998,027 of permanent pasture exclusive of hill pastures. The total of estimated ordinary stock of cattle was 3,420,044, and the stock of sheep 15,124,541. The total area in Ireland in statute acres is 20,322,641. Of these 2,173,433 are under corn crops, 1,482,091 under green crops, 28,060 under bare fallow, 1,600,495 under clover and artificial grass, and 10,002,958 under permanent pasture. In the latter item, however, full pastures are included. The cattle were estimated at 3,712,982, and the sheep at 4,270,427.

THE MUSKEL AND THE OYSTER.—It is not so much with the exquisite anatomical structure of the mussel that we have now to do; its comical habits, and mercantile value are matters demanding our more

immediate attention. Oyster-dredgers hate the mussel, and brand it as a destroyer of oysters—an accusation more fancied than real. We do not say the mussel is entirely guiltless; and we are ready to state that a native is now and then killed by mussels. It happens in this wise:—The oyster, feeding and fattening in indolent enjoyment, offers to the baby mussels, drifting about mere waifs in the sea, a tempting resting-place, and so they make fast their beards, and settle down for life. The oyster, unconscious or heedless of the growing evil upon its shell, continues to enjoy life according to the most approved fashion in oysterdom. The mussel's strength lies in its hair, as did Samson's atordoms; the beards grow and gradually extend until they cross the edges of the oyster's shells. Too late to remedy the evil, the stupid "native" contents itself by sucking in a living through an aperture which day by day grows less. At last the mussel shuts the oyster's mouth altogether; and unable either to eat, drink, or "whistle," it dies; the murderers dredged up perchance in the very act, the whole mussel family are stigmatized unfairly as oyster-killers.

TO-MORROW.

THERE are two words that bring me hope

In trouble and in sorrow,

And they, so often spoken, are

The simple words "to-morrow."

To-day the sun that hides its face

To-morrow will be shining.

"There's not a cloud," the saying is,

"But has a silver lining."

To-day the heart within my breast

With weariness is sighing,

And unto it my braggart lips

"To-morrow" are replying.

Then, echo-like, in hopes to win

Some respite from its sorrow,

My weary heart 'twixt every sigh

Repeats the words "to-morrow."

To-day sees tumbled to the ground

The castles that I builded;

To-morrow'll see them rising fair,

Like clouds at sunset gilded.

To-day my ships are wrecked at sea,

With masts and timbers shattered;

To-morrow others will bring back

The precious freight now scattered.

To-day I count the moments o'er,

Expectant of the morrow,

And strive from joys unrealized

Some recompense to borrow.

To-day I bind my brows with leaves,

By night those leaves have perished;

To-morrow sees the garland bloom

With hopes that I've long cherished.

To-day the sun may shine for me,

To-morrow's may be clouded,

And all the earth and sky above

In wintry gloom be shrouded.

But if the morrow bring me not

Release from care and sorrow,

I'll turn my face on that which is,

And court the next to-morrow.

N. G. S.

GEMS.

A LIE may respect a small thing, but there is no such thing as a small lie.

Few men get their life-labour accomplished without some sore heartaches.

It is miserable hospitality to open your doors and shut your countenance.

Man himself is the author of most of his infirmities, and of them the greater number originate purely in mental or moral causes. It would be absurd to suppose that many diseases, and deaths too, should not arise from causes beyond the control of man; but his own pursuits and habits in life lay the foundation of by far the greatest portion.

THE IMITATORS AND THE IMITATED.—If the imitator were only to use his eyes and ears he would soon learn how people loathe him; and if he were to turn to those whom he imitates he would see their countenances radiant with approving smiles—because they are flattered by his imitation. Could there be sincerer eulogy? No one imitates what he despises, but that which he admires.

EVIL SPEAKING.—They that will observe nothing in a wise man but his oversights and follies, nothing in a good one but his failings and infirmities, may render both despicable. Should we heap together all the passionate speeches, all the imprudent actions, of the best man, and present them all at one view, concealing his wisdom and virtues, he, in this disguise,

would look like a madman or a fury. And yet, if his life were fairly represented in the manner it was led, he would appear to all the world to be an admirable and excellent person. But how numerous sower any man's bad qualities are, it is just that he should have the due praise of his few real virtues.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

Two recipes, often of value in a country house, are—a very firm cement for repairing agates, china, &c., which can be made by pounding ordinary cheese and hot water into a soft paste, and then adding some quicklime. Five grains of bichloride of mercury, ten grains of camphor, and one hundred grains of pure spirit of 90 proof, will make a compound suitable for preserving fur from moths and ants.

An agriculturist has discovered a method of preserving potatoes from disease. At the time of planting, he dips the seed into a solution of chlorine, and sets the tubers to dry in the sun before planting. M. Major, a French gentleman, adopts a plan by which he produces fine potatoes. It is simply by selecting the finest seed, and developing the eyes till they become sufficiently advanced to enable the gardener to select the finest young stalk. This he preserves, and the rest are eradicated. The plant is then set in the ordinary way; and though there may be less tubers from the roots, those grown are finer and of more value.

WHEN lead paper is used to test gas a strip about half an inch in width should be slightly crumpled, so that it will not lie flat when placed upon a table, and put into a piece of glass tube about three-eighths of an inch in diameter and four or five inches long. This tube is then to be joined by short india-rubber tubes to a gas-pipe, and a stream of gas allowed to pass over the paper for not less than half an hour. A similar piece of paper, in a similar tube, should be compared with the test piece at the end of the experiment, and if the gas be free from sulphides both will have the same colour. If, on the other hand, it contain sulphides, the paper exposed to its influence will be found coloured.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ONE of the most important features of the new law courts will certainly be towers of vast elevation.

We are given to understand that the new Earl of Kingston will enjoy a rental of about 18,000l. a year, which is subject to a mortgage debt of 140,000l.

THE number of paper-makers in the United Kingdom is declining. In 1864, 414 took out licences; in 1865, 402; in 1866, 392.

A WATERSPOUT was seen about two miles off Worthing on Wednesday morning, Feb. 13. It passed away in an easterly direction.

IT was an established law among the Chinese, more than twenty-four centuries before the Christian era, that the solar years should consist of 365 days.

A GRAND anti-slavery conference of all nations is to be held in Paris in June next. Perhaps it would be as well to define what kind of slavery is to be a matter of discussion.

AMONG the works to be sent to the Paris Exhibition will be two admirable statues by the sculptor Caroni, of Florence; one of "A Slave," the other of "Cupid seated on a Lion."

SINGULAR names are now and again given to racehorses. One horse has been named John Leech, another The Duke of Athole, a third Tom Jones, a fourth The Poucher, and a fifth The Swell.

THE Isle of Dogs, the dreariest and most marshy of all the islands of the Thames, has within the last few years sprung into a seat of industry, and become the focus of the shipbuilding trade.

THE cross on the dome of St Paul's was forged at the Harefield copper works, near Uxbridge, under a tilt hammer worked by water. The hammer and anvil are still in existence, though the works have long since ceased to be used.

THE Queen of the Gipsies, residing at Yetholm, being now advanced in years, has claimed parochial relief from Jedburgh parish, her deceased husband, "Jethart Jock," who many years ago was banished for theft, being a native of the burgh.

VENETIAN MANUFACTURES.—Till the end of the year 1847 there were upwards of one hundred different industries in Venice, all of which were in a flourishing condition. The glass manufacture alone produced yearly 800,000 kilogrammes of crystal ware. The celebrated paper-mills produced upwards of 2,320,000 kilogrammes, and gave employment to 3,000 workmen. The salt marshes of the lagoons annually produced more than 25,000,000 lb. of salt.

CONTENTS.

Page	Page
REGINALD'S FORTUNE ... 481	CHILLINGWORTH ... 497
POLITENESS ... 484	OLIVER DARVEL ... 499
THE VERY SMALLEST ELEPHANT ... 484	FACEZIE ... 502
DISCOVERY OF TWO SKELETONS NEAR CAEN ... 484	HOUSEHOLD TREASURES ... 503
EFFECTS OF THE DART IN THE HORNS OF PARILLA ... 484	GEMS ... 503
MARY ... 484	TO-MORROW ... 503
JULIE GERARD ... 484	STATISTICS ... 503
SWEET BRIAR COTTAGE ... 488	MISCELLANEOUS ... 503
JOSEPHINE CONEY ... 488	
THE WATER-WOLF ... 489	OLIVER DARVEL, commenced in ... 182
ANFASIA ... 489	REGINALD'S FORTUNE, commenced in ... 184
SCIENCE ... 489	ANFASIA, commenced in ... 187
NEW NAYAC CITY ... 489	SWEET BRIAR COTTAGE, commenced in ... 199
EVENING ON THE WATER ... 489	

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

X. X.—You should consult a solicitor with a view to proceedings in the County Court.

T. INDEX.—Sinclair's children are without doubt entitled, to the exclusion of those of C.

VINE.—To bronze iron, or iron wire, dip it into a solution of sulphate of copper—the common blue vitriol.

P. W. B.—There was nothing wrong in the young woman's assumption of the names in which she was married.

PHOTOGRAPH.—Haghe's Principles and Practice of Photography, price one shilling, will serve your purpose.

MARY II.—Wash in warm water, dry the skin well; then use violet powder; another recipe is to use bran water.

MILKED.—It was in 528 Draco established his law, said to have been "written in blood," from their severity at Athens.

G. S. C.—You may make a deep green by the admixture of Prussian blue and gamboge; the chief portion must be of Prussian blue.

ANXIOUS.—To gain information respecting money in chancery you must ascertain the name of the suit or matter and employ a solicitor.

W. L. A.—A distress may be levied without notice at any time after the rent becomes due. The landlord, however, cannot dispose of the goods until five days after seizure.

GEORGE J. W. 5 ft 2 in. in height, fair, hazel eyes, good tempered, a steady young man, and a sailor. Respondent must be about eighteen or nineteen.

G. P. W.—If the apprentice on obtaining full age refuse to serve longer under his indenture he clearly gives up all benefit in relation thereto, although when under age he might have enforced them.

THOMAS.—The lease so far as the lessee is concerned, is valid for so much of the land as the landlord has power to let on lease. The lessee can recover damages from him if evicted from the ground included.

G. L. N.—You cannot remove hair from the forehead without injuring the skin. It is true that there are depilatories, but we cannot recommend them. Why not let nature take her own course?

A. P. B. is desirous of finding a wife; money is no object, as he has sufficient to keep up a medium station. He is 5 ft 10 in. in height, fair, and of good address. Respondent must be amiable, lively, and fair.

THE ROSE WITHOUT A THORN. twenty, medium height, good looking, and a respectable mechanic, wishes to correspond with a young person from eighteen to twenty-two, good looking, and with a little capital.

MAUDE CLEVELY. nineteen, black eyes and hair, and a nice fresh complexion. Respondent must be tall, fair, about twenty, and respectable. "Maude" would rather have a nice book and a room to herself than all company.

MRS. M.—The name of the Royal Family of England is Gaelic. It was the name of the Queen before marriage and so remains, for a Queen Regnant does not change her name on marriage.

EDWIN.—To make glue for ready use employ whisky instead of water; put both in a bottle, cork tightly, and put aside for three or four days, when it will be fit for use without the application of heat.

J. BROW.—It was in 1269 that churches and monasteries were used as theatres, and clergymen and monks were the authors and actors of those pieces called "Mysteries of Chester."

J. H. P. twenty-four, 5 ft 7 in. in height, dark hair and complexion, plenty of whiskers, and not considered bad looking by his friends, wishes to correspond with a good-looking fair young lady, about eighteen or twenty, affectionate, good tempered, and with a little income.

G. JAY.—A good cure for bunions: Take chloric acid twenty grains, one ounce of fir balsam, and white wax each, melt the balsam and wax, and while cooling, add the acid; stir until an ointment is formed, spread it on a piece of kid, and apply to the bunion; change once or twice a day.

JACOB.—You ask how a man can know himself. He must study his natural temper, his constitutional inclinations, and passions; for by these a man's best judgment is easily perverted; they are the inlets of prejudice, the unguarded avenues of the mind, by which a thousand errors and secret faults find admission without being observed.

MARCE.—In the time of Augustus the temple of Janus was shut three times, one of which was in the year 750, before the birth of our Saviour, according to Isaiah's prophecy that all the world should be blessed with peace; when the Prince of Peace was born this temple was shut by Vespasian after his triumph over the Jews.

CURLEY HAIR.—To the best of our belief the gallant colonel you name is dead; should this, however, not be the case, and we are not by any means certain, for it is many years since he retired from his official position into private life, a letter addressed to the General Post Office, St. Martin's-le-grand, would assuredly reach him. We are not aware of the relationship, but providing you have sufficient reason to ask, the gallant officer you mention would most likely

answer the question if you were to address a letter to him. We know nothing of the count you name, except that his name was in the *Navy List*. How can you, speaking and writing "Spanish," "Italian," and "Hindustanee," ask, "If this gentleman is connected with the late Prince Consort or Her Majesty the Queen?" 4. If, in addition to your qualifications as a linguist, you be a good accountant, you ought not to be long without employment. Remember, however, that "the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." We can only advise you to carefully watch the advertisements in the daily papers, or to advertise for what you require.

WINTER.—The origin of the Irish word *supper* is that when a half-dressed potato is cut in two the centre shows a disc with a halo around it, like the moon; this does not digest so quickly, and allows the person who eats it to go longer without food, but it is a great detriment to the coating of the stomach.

TOM, eighteen, 5 ft 9 in. in height, blue eyes, light curly hair, a hard-working young man, earning at present 15s. per week, a member of the Temperance Society, and likes to spend his evenings at home. Would prefer respondent to be at present in service, not particular about looks, but of course he would not object to one who is good looking.

MARY DOTLE.—Education is an improvement of self, and this improvement naturally leads to increase of self-respect; besides, if an interest in education be once produced the labour to attain it proves a most salutary distraction. An idle mind is continually open to temptation, while a mind bent upon some useful task cannot fail to be strengthened.

SOLITUDE AT SEA.

The water and the sky.

And not a sail in sight;

The billows rise and fall;

And the sunshine glides them all

With a fringe of rosy light.

The water and the sky.

The softly fading day;

The ripple gently raves

Upon the ocean's breast,

And the wavelets cease to play.

The water and the sky.

The quiet, holy night;

Peeping from cloudy bars,

Are the brightly shining stars,

And the moon's pure, changeful light.

The water and the sky.

The fierce tempestuous roar,

The wild, unquiet tone

Of ocean's mighty moan.

Crying from shore to shore.

The water and the sky.

Are solitudes to thee;

Poor, slinking, restless heart,

Alas, how frail thou art

On this vast rolling sea.

The water and the sky.

Know their Creator's will;

And ocean's stormy roar

Is hushed from shore to shore

When *He* says "Peace, be still!"

T. A. K.

TOM CHALLENGER. twenty, 5 ft 5 in. in height, with light brown hair, whiskers, fond of home and music, considered good looking, a clerk with 70l. a year, and an advance, of 20l. every year. Respondent must be a dark young lady about nineteen, of good family, 5 ft 3 in. in height, good looking, and accomplished; a resident in Newcastle preferred.

CLAIR.—"Aesthetics" is derived from the Greek word, signifying "perception," and is the science which treats of the beautiful; it has also been termed the sentiment of the pure, relating only to the etheric; it is the language of the feelings; it is the longing of the soul for all that is good and holy, but which cannot by the aid of language be conveyed to another mind. We feel, we know *how* we feel, but we cannot make another clearly understand it.

FLORA.—The most approved way of making ox-tail soup is the following: Cut up the tails, separating them at the joints, wash, and put them in a stoppan, with some butter, add half a pint of water, and stir them over the fire until the juices are drawn off the stoppan with water, and add salt cut the vegetables, add them with peppercorns and herbs gently, and simmer until the tails are tender, strain, thicken with flour, flavour with ketchup and port wine.

DORCAS.—Decidedly no other exercise is equal to laughing; nothing acts so happily upon the chest; ten hearty laughs will do more to advance the general health and vitality than anything else; but, of course, you cannot laugh at will, so play with your children, introduce some games requiring competition and merriment, or any of the sports you can recall from your early experience. One good laugh is worth more than medicine to restore health.

E. HENSON.—1. *THE 7 DAYS' JOURNAL* is out of print. 2. The peer you name, who is the fifth Marquis, was born in the year 1837. His lordship is also a viscount, a baron, and a baronet, and we believe not married; address, Ball's Park, Hertford, or Raynham Hall, Suffolk. 3. The W. W. on the sovereign are the initials of the person who cuts the die. 4. *Bona munda* means the fashionable word; *demis munda* the reverse. The other sentence may be translated, "Fortune follows virtue."

NELLIE.—You ask what gentleness means. It must be carefully distinguished from the mean spirit of cowardice and the fawning of sycophants. It renounces not just right from fear, it gives up no important truth from flattery; but, on the contrary, requires a brave spirit and a fixed principle to give it any real value. It arises from that unaffected civility which springs from a gentle mind, and there is a charm in it infinitely more powerful than in all the studied manners of the most polished courtier.

ANDREW.—When a portrait lens is employed for copying any object care should be taken that the size of the original be not exceeded. If it be necessary to enlarge the object copied the lens should be reversed, so as to present the front lens to the ground glass. A good copying lens may be extemporized by removing the back lens of the portrait combination, and inserting in its place another *front*. A combination of this kind requires a small stop, but when the size

of the copy approaches that of the original it forms a picture of great brilliancy.

CONSTANCE.—You may rest assured that whenever you hear music in a house that dwelling is tenanted by a happy family; if you hear a domestic going gleefully about her work, and lightening her labours with a song, you may take it for granted that she has neither a discontented temper nor a scolding mistress. In some houses the very purring of a cat is musical, and the warbling of a canary is often more soothing than the most dulcet of operatic voices, and the great recommendation of home music is that it is joy-speaking as well as joy-inspiring.

DUNHARTONIAN.—1. The present Duke of Newcastle and Hamilton are first cousins, the late Duke of Newcastle having married the sister of the late Duke of Hamilton. 2. His present Grace of Newcastle is the sixth duke. The dukedom was created in 1756. The present Duke of Hamilton is the twelfth peer who has borne that title; he is also Duke of Brandon in England and Châtelain in France. His Grace is the son of Her Royal Highness the Princess Marie of Baden, who is a relative of the Emperor of the French.

CLAIR.—Those who told you that you could not learn to play the piano-forte when arrived at the age of eighteen were to some extent correct, for the facility of finger required to form a good musician and a good touch is seldom acquired except the study is commenced when very young; still, let not that discourage you, for if you have a great love for the science, a good ear, much patience and perseverance, and plenty of time for intense practice (for remember that is absolutely necessary), you may attain your aim.

BETIE and GERT. "Betie," nineteen, 5 ft 4 in. in height, brown hair, blue eyes, passably good looking, but not pretty, and of a very loving disposition. "Gerty," sixteen, very tall, good figure, pretty mouth, dark brown curly hair, dark blue eyes, fair complexion, considered very pretty, and will have a large fortune on her wedding-day. Respondents must be tall, dark, and handsome.

GERT QUEEN and FAIRY. "Gipsy Queen," twenty-three, medium height, with dark brown hair and eyes, considered good looking, with a warm and loving heart, good temper, and thoroughly domesticated. "Fairy," twenty-four, a petite figure, auburn hair, blue eyes, girlish looking, pretty, cheerful, very fond of children, domesticated, and of a confident and loving disposition. Respondents must be dark, good looking, cheerful, good tempered, respectable working men, with about 2l. a week each.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:—

R. B. is responded to by—"Annie Neal," who thinks he is the sort of person would suit her, of medium height, dark wavy hair and eyes, considered by her friends good looking, of very respectable family, and a loving disposition.

W. W. again by—"Eleanor," who is very glad that he thinks she will suit him, and will be pleased to exchange *cartes*, and, if agreeable, would like to have him as soon as possible, as she is very anxious to possess it.

Max by—"T. F.," who desires he will send her his *carte de visite*, sixteen, 5 ft 3 in. in height, light hair, and fair complexion.

LORELY ONE by—"Harriette W.," who thinks she would suit him, as she is very domesticated, eighteen, very fair skin, dark blue eyes, brown hair, and pearly teeth.

F. B. B. by—"Violet W.," seventeen, light golden hair, blue eyes, and very fair; if he should deem this worth his notice she would like to hear from him at the earliest opportunity.

J. T. a bachelor, by—"Florence Hayward," tall, very pretty, golden hair, light blue eyes, ladylike, domesticated, very respectable, but poor, well educated, and fond of home.

M. DUKE (a French gentleman) by—"Annie," whose prospects are good.

ALFRED by—"Peggie," who thinks she would suit him, twenty-seven, rather tall, fair, not very good looking, nor has she any fortune, but would make a good and loving wife, a good housekeeper, well connected, and no objection to go abroad; and—"Fattie," who is a good figure, considered handsome, and is not without money.

A GERMAN LADY by—"Iva."

LAZETTE by—"Augusta," twenty-one, 5 ft 7 in. in height, dark complexion, blue eyes, and has 200l. a year.

MARY by—"L. J.," tall, good looking, and has an income of 100l. per annum.

ANNE by—"N. G.," twenty, 5 ft 9 in. in height, rather dark, is in a confidential position in a large business house, with a salary of 160l. a year.

POLLY by—"B. C. B.," twenty-five, 5 ft 9 in. in height, dark hair, in a good position, and an income of from 150l. to 200l. a year.

FANNY by—"Frank," who, pleased with her description, is anxious to correspond with her. He is twenty-one, tall, with luxuriant whiskers and moustache, and considered good looking.

AMY by—"W. N.," who would like to receive her *carte de visite*, nineteen, 5 ft 5 in. in height, dark complexion, brown eyes, black hair, and has good prospects in an ironmongery business.

LOUISA by—"X. Y. Z. E. R.," twenty-three, 5 ft 7 in. in height, black curly hair, dark complexion, is an A.B. in her Majesty's service, and feels sure he will make her a good husband; would like to exchange *cartes*—"A Sailor," twenty-two, 5 ft 5 in. in height, dark, with dark hair and whiskers, hazel eyes, of a loving disposition, and good looking; and—"Henry Bailey," twenty-one, fair, good looking, a seaman on board H.M.S. Irresistible, Southampton Waters, and has been in the service eight years.

PART XLVI, FOR MARCH, IS NOW READY. PRICE 6d.

* * * NOW READY, VOL. VII. OF THE LONDON READER. Price 4s. 6d.

Also, the TITLE and INDEX to VOL. VII. Price ONE PENNY.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER," 334, Strand, W.C.

†† We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. If they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

London: Printed and Published for the Proprietor, at 334, Strand, by J. WATKIN.